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1767



1568/1558.

THERON and *ASPASIO*:

OR, A

S E R I E S

OF

D I A L O G U E S

AND

L E T T E R S,

UPON THE

Most *Important* and *Interesting* SUBJECTS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

By JAMES HERVEY, A.M.

Late Rector of *Weston-Favell*, in *Northamptonshire*.

*The Memorial of thine abundant Kindness shall be shewed,
and Men shall sing of thy Righteousness. Psal. cxlv. 7.*

V O L. I.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed by Charles Rivington,

For JOHN RIVINGTON, at the *Bible* and *Crown*, in
St. Paul's Church-yard.

M D C C L X I.



PLATE 3

THE TITHE

I am sorry to hear
with me, &c.
should be



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B L



T O

The Right Honourable

Lady FRANCES SHIRLEY.

M A D A M,

IF Christianity was inconsistent with true *Politeness*, or prejudicial to real *Happiness*, I should be extremely injudicious, and inexcusably ungrateful, in presenting these Essays to your LADYSHIP. But as the Religion of *JESUS* is the grand Ornament of our Nature; and a

iv DEDICATION.

Source of the sublimest Joy, the Purport of the following Pages cannot be unworthy the Countenance and Protection of the *most accomplished* Person. Neither can there be a Wish, more suitable to the Obligations or the Dictates of a *grateful* Heart, than that You may experience what You read, and *be* what You patronize.

DID Religion consist in a *formal* Round of external Observances, or a *forced* Submission to some rigorous Austerities, I should not scruple to join with the Infidel and the Sensualist, to dread it in one View, and to despise it in another. You need not be informed, MADAM, that it is as much superior to all such *low* and *forbidding* Singularities, as the Heavens are higher than the Earth. It is described by an Author, who learnt its Theory in the Regions of Paradise, and who displayed its Efficacy in his own
most

DEDICATION. v

most exemplary Conversation.—It is thus described by that incomparable Author; *The Kingdom of GOD, is not Meat and Drink, but Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the HOLY GHOST.*

To be reconciled to the Omnipotent GOD—To be interested in the unsearchable Riches of *CHRIST*—To be renewed in our Hearts, and influenced in our Lives, by the sanctifying Operations of the Divine *SPIRIT*—This is *evangelical* Righteousness. This is *genuine* Religion. This, *MADAM*, is the Kingdom of GOD established in the Soul.—How benign and inviting is such an Institution! How honourable and advantageous such a State! And from such Privileges, what other Effects can flow, but that *Peace, which passeth all Understanding?* That *Joy, which is unspeakable and glorious?*

vi DEDICATION.

Is there any Thing in the Amusements of the Gay, and Pursuits of the Ambitious, of greater, of equal, of comparable Value? Is not all that Wealth can purchase, all that Grandeur can bestow, somewhat like those glittering Bubbles, which when viewed are *Emptiness*, when grasped are *Nothing*? Whereas, the Comforts, the Benefits, the Hopes of Christianity, are at once supremely excellent, and infinitely durable. A Portion, suited to the Dignity of a rational Soul; large as its Faculties, and immortal as its Being.

ALL these Blessings are centered in *CHRIST*; were purchased by *CHRIST*; are communicated from *CHRIST*.

It is for want of knowing those boundless and everlasting Treasures of *pardon-
ing, justifying, saving* Merit, which the *LORD JESUS CHRIST* possesses,
and

D E D I C A T I O N. vii

and which He freely dispenses even to Sinners, that so many *unthinking* Persons are attached to ignoble Objects, and beguiled by delusory Pleasures. *Unhappy* Creatures! What can they do, but catch at Shadows, and stoop to Trifles, while they are ignorant of the grand, the substantial, the exalted Good?—It is for want of duly attending to that Fulness of Grace, and that Plenteousness of Redemption, which dwell in our most adorable SAVIOUR, that so many *serious* Persons are Strangers to the Tranquility and Sweetness of Religion: are subject to all its Restraints, but enjoy few, if any of its Delights. *Mistaken* Zealots! How can they avoid the gloomy Situation and the uncomfortable Circumstance, so long as they withdraw themselves from the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS and his all-cheering Beams?

viii DEDICATION.

MAY your LADYSHIP live continually under his heavenly Light and healing Wings! Be more fully assured of his dying Love, and have brighter, still brighter Manifestations of his immense Perfections! By these delightful Views, and by that precious Faith, may your Heart be transformed into his *holy*, his *amiable*, his *divine* Image! Your Happiness will then be just such as is wished, but far greater than can be expressed by,

M A D A M,

Your most obliged, and

Most obedient humble Servant,

Weston-Favell,
Jan. 6, 1755.

JAMES HERVEY.



P R E F A C E.



THE Reader will probably expect some Account of the ensuing Work; and, to gratify Him in this Particular, will be a real Pleasure to the Author.

The Beauty and Excellency of the Scriptures
—*The Ruin and Depravity of human Nature*
—*Its happy Recovery, founded on the Atonement, and effected by the SPIRIT of CHRIST*
—*These are some of the chief Points, vindicated, illustrated, and applied in the following Sheets.—But the grand Article, that which makes the principal Figure, is the IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS of our divine LORD; from whence arises our Justification before GOD, and our renewed Title to every heavenly Blessing.*

P R E F A C E.

ing. An Article, which, though eminent for its Importance, seems to be little understood, and less regarded; if not much mistaken, and almost forgotten.

The Importance of this great evangelical Doctrine — how worthy it is of the most attentive Consideration, and of universal Acceptance — is hinted in the second Dialogue. So that I need, in this Place, do nothing more, than give the Sense of a Passage from Witſius, which is there introduced in the Notes.—“ The
 “ Doctrine of Justification, says that excellent
 “ Author, spreads itself through the whole
 “ System of Divinity. As this is either solidly
 “ established, or superficially touched; fully
 “ stated, or slightly dismissed; accordingly, the
 “ whole Structure of Religion, either rises
 “ graceful and magnificent, superior to Assault,
 “ and beyond the Power of Decay; or else it
 “ appears disproportionate and defective, totters
 “ on its Foundation, and threatens an opprobrious
 “ Fall *.”

The Design is executed in the Form of Dialogue. Those Parts only excepted, in which it was not easy to carry on a Conversation, and assign to each Person a proper Degree of Significance. Here, to avoid the common Imputation, of bringing upon the Stage a Mute or a Shadow,

* See p. 65, 66.

P R E F A C E xi

Shadow—one who fights without Weapons, and submits without a Contest—the Scene shifts. Our Gentlemen separate; and, instead of conversing, enter upon an epistolary Correspondence.

The Dialogue Form seems, on many Considerations, a very eligible Way of Writing.—Hereby, the Author gives an Air both of Dignity and of Modesty to his Sentiments. Of Dignity; by delivering them from the Mouths of Persons, in every respect superior to Himself. Of Modesty; because We no longer consider Him in the raised, but invidious Capacity of a Teacher. Instead of calling Us to his Feet, and dictating his Precepts, He gratifies our Curiosity. He turns back a Curtain, and admits Us to some remarkable Interviews, or interesting Conferences. We over-bear, by a kind of innocent or imaginary Stealth, the Debates which pass in the Recesses of Privacy; which are carried on, with the most unreserved Freedom of Speech, and Openness of Heart.—A Circumstance, which will apologize for some Peculiarities, that might otherwise be inconsistent with Humility, or offensive to Delicacy. Particularly, it may abviate the Disgust, which generally, and indeed deservedly, attends the frequent Intrusion of that ambitious and usurping little Monosyllable, I.

WODRIG

The

*The Names of the Persons are prefixed, each to his respective Share of the Discourse; in Imitation of Cicero, and for the Reasons which he assigns. Quasi enim ipsos induxi loquentes: ne Inquam & Inquit sæpius interponerentur. Atque id eo feci, ut tanquam præsentibus coram haberi Sermo videretur *. This Method, He very justly intimates, is removed farthest from the Narrative, and makes the nearest Approaches to Life and Reality. It quite secretes the Author; and, by introducing the Persons themselves, renders all that passes entirely their own.—It prevents likewise the Repetition of those interlocutory Words, He said, He replied. Which, unless the Speeches are very long, must frequently recur, and have no pleasing Effect upon the Ear. And if the Speeches are long, the Spirit of Conversation is lost. The Associates are no longer talking; but one of them, or the Author, is lecturing.*

Though I have so much to say in Behalf of the Model, I have very little to say with regard to the Execution—unless it be to confess the Deficiency. There is not, I am sensible, that peculiar Air and distinguishing Turn, which should mark and characterize each Speaker. This is what the Nature of finished Dialogue requires, and what the Author applauds

* *De Amicitia.*

plauds in some very superior Writers. But, not having the Ability to copy it, He has not the Vanity to affect it.—Nevertheless, the attentive Reader will, all along, perceive a Difference in the Sentiment, if not in the Language. The Materials vary, even when they run into the same Mould, and take the same Form.—In the Diction also there must be some Diversity. Because, several of the Objections are proposed in the very Words of one or two eminent Writers, who have appeared on the other Side of the Question. These are not particularized by the Mark of Quotation; because, the Man of Reading will have no Occasion for the Assistance of such an Index, and the Man of Taste will probably discern them by the Singularity of the Style.

Some of the following Pieces, it must be acknowledged, are of the controversial Kind. A Species of Writing, least susceptible of the Graces, which embellish Composition; or rather most destitute of the Attractives, which engage Attention, and create Delight.—Yet I have sometimes thought, that it is not absolutely impossible, to make even the stern Face of Controversy wear a Smile; and to reap some valuable Fruit, from the rugged Furrows of Disputation. Whether this is effected in the present Work, the Public must judge; that it has been attempted

tempted, the Author may be permitted to declare.

To soften the Asperities of Argument, Views of Nature are interspersed. That, if the former should carry the Appearance of a rude entangled Forest, or of a frowning gloomy Recess, there may be some agreeable Openings, and lightsome Avenues, to admit a Prospect of the Country: which is always arrayed in Charms, and never fails to please.

The Author confesses a very peculiar Fondness for the amiable Scenes of Creation. It is therefore not at all improbable, but his Excursions on this Topic may be of the diffusive Kind, and his Descriptions somewhat luxuriant. It is hoped, however, that the benevolent Reader will indulge Him in this favourite Foible.—If any should feel the same prevailing Passion for the Beauties of Nature, 'tis possible these Persons may be inclined, not only to excuse, but to approve the Fault; and may take Part with the Lover, even in Opposition to the Critic.

Farther to diversify the Piece, Sketches of Philosophy are introduced. Easy to be understood, and calculated to entertain the Imagination, as well as to improve the Heart. More particularly, to display the wise and beneficent Design of Providence, in the various Appearances and numberless Productions of the material
World.

World. Neither are these Remarks altogether foreign to the main Point. But, as far as the Wonders of Creation may comport with the Riches of Grace, subserve the general End.

As to the Choice of my Subjects—Some People have desired to see an Invektive, against the fashionable and predominant Vices of the Age. This, I apprehend, would be like picking off the Leaves, or clipping away the Twigs, from some over-grown and noxious Tree. Waving this tedious and ineffectual Toil, I would rather lay the Axe to the Root. Let the Knowledge and Love of CHRIST take place in the Heart, and not only a few of the Branches, but the whole Body of Sin will fall at once.

*Some would have the Author insist upon the conscientious Observation of the Sabbath, inculcate the daily Worship of GOD in the Family, and urge a devout Attendance on the public Ordinances of Religion.—But when a Person is convinced of Sin, and made sensible of Misery; when he has tasted the good Word of GOD *, and seen by Faith the LORD's CHRIST †, He will want no Solicitation or Incitement, to these Means of Grace, and Exercises of Godliness. He will have just the same Disposition to them all, as the hungry Appetite has to whole-*
some

* Heb. vi. 5.

† Luke ii. 26.

*some Food, or the new-born Babe * to the Milk of the Breast.*

Others may imagine, that I have neglected the Interests of Morality; because, here is no professed Attempt to delineate its Duties, or enforce its Practice.—Let these Persons remember, that Morality never makes such vigorous Shoots, never produces such generous Fruit, as when engrafted on evangelical Principles.—And if I do not crop the Pink, the Rose, and the Carnation; if I do not gather the Peach, the Nectarine, and the Pine-apple; and put them into my Reader's Hand, for his immediate Enjoyment: I am endeavouring to sow the Seeds, and plant the Roots, in his Garden; which, if cherished by the favourable Influence of Heaven, will yield Him, not an occasional, but a constant Supply of all.

As

* 1 Pet. ii. 2. This Comparison is, perhaps, the most exact and expressive, that Words can form, or Fancy conceive. Babes covet nothing but the Milk of the Breast. They are indifferent about all other Things. Give them Riches, give them Honours, give them whatever you please, without this rich, delicious, balmy Nutriment, they will not, they cannot be satisfied.—How finely does this illustrate, and how forcibly inculcate, what our LORD styles, *The single Eye*, and *The One Thing needful*? Or, the salutary Doctrines, and delightful Privileges of the Gospel; together with that supreme Value for them, and undivided Complacency in them, which are the distinguishing Character of the Christian!

*As several Texts of Scripture come under Consideration, Criticisms upon the Original are frequently subjoined. In order to clear up some Difficulties, to rectify some Mistranslations, or point out the many delicate and masterly Strokes, which occur in the BIBLE.—And glad should I be, extremely glad, if I might recommend and endear that invaluable Book. If, as the Divine REDEEMER rideth on in the Word of Truth, of Meekness, and Righteousness *, this Hand might scatter a Palm Branch, or this Performance might lie as a Floweret, to strew his Way †, and solemnize his Triumph.*

In the Course of the Disputation, I dare not suppose, that I have discussed all the Arguments, which Sagacity may devise, or Sophistry urge. Perhaps, I have not removed all the Scruples, which may awaken Prejudice, or embarrass Integrity. This, however, I may venture to affirm, that I myself have met with no considerable Objection, which is not either expressly answered, or virtually refuted, in these Conferences.—And, though I should neither satisfy nor silence the Gainsayer, I shall think my Endeavours happily employed, if they may throw Light upon the dim Apprehension; establish the wavering Faith; or comfort the afflicted Conscience.

VOL. I.

a

If

* Psal. xlv. 4.

† Alluding to Matt. xxi. 8.

*If any should burlesque or ridicule these venerable Truths, and exalted Privileges, I shall only say with my Divine MASTER; O! that Thou hadst known, in this thy Day, the Things that belong to thy Peace! But now they are hid, it is evident from such a Procedure, they are hid from thine Eyes *.—Should any, in the Spirit of Decency and Candor, either start new, or revive old Objections, I doubt not, but they will receive both a due Examination and a proper Reply. As these Doctrines enter into the very Essence of the Gospel, and constitute the Glory of our Religion, they can never want a Succession of Advocates, so long as the Sun and Moon endure.—For my own part, I must beg leave to retire from the Lists, and lay down the Weapons of Controversy. Virgil's Language is my Resolution;*

*Discedam, explebo Numerum, reddarque
Tenebris.*

This Declaration is made, not from any the least Suspicion, that my Tenets are indefensible; but because I would apprize my Friends, and the Friends of our common Christianity, that the Field is clear and open for them to advance; that I resign to others the glorious
Com-

* Luke xix. 42.

Combat; and shall content myself with wishing them Success in the Name of the LORD.

—Because, it becomes a Person in my declining State, to be more peculiarly intent upon encountering a different Adversary; who is sure to overcome, and never allows Quarter. Yet, by this Word of my Testimony, and by the Blood of the LAMB, I hope to triumph even when I fall; and to be more than Conqueror, through JEHOVAH my Righteousness.*

Should any Thing be urged, forcible enough to overthrow my Arguments, or detect a Mistake in my Sentiments, the World may depend upon seeing a free and undissembled Retraction. I shall look upon it as a Duty, which I owe to my Conscience, to my Readers, and to my GOD, publicly to acknowledge the Error.

—It is one Thing to be silent; another to be obstinate. As I shall inflexibly adhere to the first; I would, with equal Steadiness, renounce the last. Though I withdraw from the Strife of Pens and of Tongues, I shall take care to preserve a Mind, ever accessible to Truth, ever open to Conviction. A Mind, infinitely more concerned for the Purity and Prosperity of the everlasting Gospel, than for the Prevalence of

my own Opinion, or the Credit of my own Performance.

As I have the Happiness of being a Member, and the Honour of being a Minister, of the reformed established Church; I cannot but reflect, with a peculiar Pleasure, that every Doctrine of Note, maintained in these Dialogues and Letters, is either implied in our Liturgy, asserted in our Articles, or taught in our Homilies.—It affords me likewise some Degree of Satisfaction to observe, that the most material of the Sentiments, have been adopted by Milton; are incorporated into his Paradise Lost; and add Dignity to the sublimest Poem in the World.—To have the highest human Authority, and the first Genius of the Nation on a Writer's Side, is no contemptible Support. This must surely give a Sanction, where-ever our religious Establishment is revered, or polite Literature is held in Repute. Yet even this Sanction, compared with the Oracle of Revelation, is only like a Range of Cyphers, connected with the initial Figure. Which, were they detached, would be insignificant; but, in such a Subordination, are considerable.

Perhaps, it should be farther acknowledged, that I have not always confined myself to the Method of our Systematic Writers, nor followed their Train of Thoughts with a scrupulous Regularity.

P R E F A C E.

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gularity. I would conduct my Fellow-creature to the supreme and eternal Good, CHRIST JESUS. I have chosen the Path, which seemed most agreeable and inviting, rather than most beaten and frequented. If this leads, with equal Certainty, to the great and desirable End, I dare promise myself an easy Excuse. However, that Method and Order, in the doctrinal Parts of the Plan, are not wholly neglected, the following Summary of Contents may shew.





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THE HISTORY OF THE
CONFERENCE



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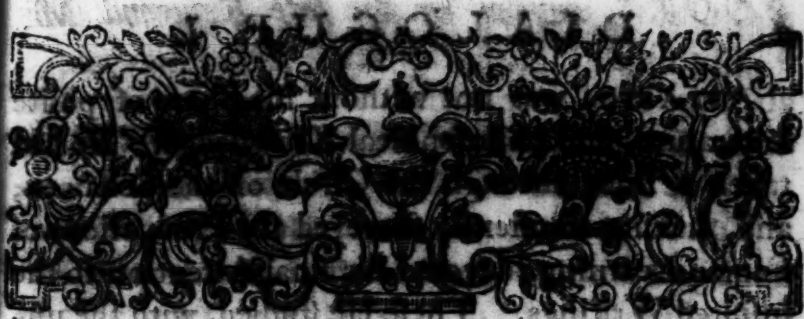
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statues—
th— Its

Compa-
Celebra-
Rhap-
every



...dissipated Impatience of a Critic; yet with the reason
and simplicity of a Christian. These Men are guided
by the unerring standard of Duty—their conduct
is the result of Reason and the dictates of Virtue.
the DELTY; affording the most satisfactory and
imposing Display of all the Divine Attributes.
...was somewhat weary in his Temper; and
...on Obedience, more use of a little more
...not to expose his riches, but to converse with
...Sometimes, however, his real Sentiments
...in order to hit the subject, or discover the
...Opinion of others. ...the lesson includes the
...more or less of it, the highest wisdom is
...DIALOGUE I

HERON, was a Gentleman of fine
Taste; of accurate, rather than exten-
sive Reading; and particularly charmed
with the Study of Nature. He traced
the Planets in their Courses; and ex-
amined the Formation of the meanest Vegetable;
not merely to gratify a refined Curiosity, but chiefly
to cultivate the nobler Principles of Morality.
Several Discoveries He made, and every Discovery
He improved, to this important End—to raise in his
Mind, more exalted Apprehensions of the Supreme
BEING—and to enlarge his Affections, with a
disinterested Benevolence; conformable, in some De-
gree, to that boundless Liberality, which pervades
and animates the whole Creation.

VOL. I.

B

ASPASIO,

ASPASIO, was not without his Share of polite Literature, and philosophical Knowledge. He had taken a Tour through the Circle of the Sciences; and, having transiently surveyed the Productions of human Learning, devoted his final Attention to the inspired Writings. These He studied, with the unbiassed Impartiality of a Critic; yet with the reverential Simplicity of a Christian. These He regarded, as the *unerring* Standard of Duty—the *authentic* Charter of Salvation—and the *brightest* Mirror of the DEITY; affording the most satisfactory and sublime Display of all the divine Attributes.

Theron, was somewhat warm in his Temper; and would, upon Occasion, make use of a little innocent Rallery; not to expose his Friend, but to enliven the Conversation. Sometimes *disguising* his real Sentiments; in order to lift the Subject, or discover the Opinion of others.—*Aspasio* seldom indulges the humorous or satyrical Vein, but argues with *Modesty of Wisdom* *. Never puts on the Appearance of Guile, but always speaks the Dictates of his Heart.

Aspasio was on a Visit at *Theron's* Seat.—One Evening, when some neighbouring Gentlemen were just gone, and had left them alone, the Conversation took the following Turn.

Asp. I would always be ready, both to acknowledge and applaud, whatever is amiable in the Conduct

Mith. Sapientia Leli. *Hor.* It is a most amiable Character, and delicately drawn. But it is expressed with greater Strength, and superior Beauty, by the sacred Penman; Let Him shew out of a good Conversation his Works with all the Gentleness, or (as you would say) with the very *Modesty of Wisdom*. Jam. iii. 12.

shift of Others: The Gentlemen, who gave Us their Company at Dinner, seem to be all of a different Character. Yet each, in his own Way, is extremely agreeable.

Lysander has lively Parts, and is quick at Repartee. But He never abuses his Wit, to create Uneasiness in the honest Heart, or to flush the modest Cheek with Confusion.—What Solidity of Judgment, and Depth of Penetration, appear in *Crito*! Yet, how free are his Discourses, from the magisterial Tone, or the dictatorial Solemnity!—*Philenor*'s Taste in the polite Arts, is remarkably correct: yet, without the least Tincture of Vanity, or any weak Fondness for Applause. He never interrupts the Progress, or wrests the Topic of Conversation; in order to shine in his particular Province.—*Trebonius*, I find, has signalized his Valour in several Campaigns. Though a Warrior and a Traveler, He gives Himself no overbearing or ostentatious Airs. In *Trebonius*, You see the brave Officer, regulated by all the Decency of the Academic, and sweetened with all the Affability of the Courtier.

No one affects a morose *Reserve*, or assumes an immoderate *Loquacity* *. To engross the Talk, is tyrannical: to seal up the Lips, is monkish. Every one, therefore, from a Fund of good Sense, contributes his Quota: and each speaks, not with an Ambition

B 2

* *Zeno*, being present, where a Person of this loquacious Disposition played Himself off, said, with an Air of Concern in his Countenance: *I perceive, that poor Gentleman is ill. He has a violent Flux upon Him.* The Company was alarmed, and the Rhetorician stopped in his Career. *Yes*, added the Philosopher, *The Flux is so violent, that it has carried his Ears into his Tongue.*

bition to *set off* Himself, but from a Desire to *please* the Company.

Ther. Indeed, *Aspasio*, I think myself happy, in this accomplished Set of Acquaintance. Who add all the Complaisance and Politeness of the Gentleman, to the Benevolence and Fidelity of the Friend.

Their Conversation is as innocent as their Taste is refined.—They have a noble Abhorrence of Slander, and detest the low ungenerous Artifices of Detraction.—No loose Jest, has either the Service of their Tongue, or the Sanction of their Smile.—Was You to be with them, in their free Moments; You would hear Nothing, that has a Tendency to *Profaneness*, or is any Way injurious to *Purity* of Morals. Even their Gaiety is remote from Indecency, and their very Wit free from Gall.

Asp. There is but *one* Qualification wanting, to render your Friends completely valuable; and their social Interviews a continual Blessing.

Ther. Pray, what is that?

Asp. A Turn for more serious Conferences.—Their literary Debates are beautiful Sketches, of whatever is curious in the Sciences, or delicate in the Arts. From their Remarks on our national Affairs, and on foreign Occurrences, a Person may almost form a System of Politics.—But, they never touch upon any Topic of Religion; never celebrate the sublime Perfections of the DEITY; never illustrate the Beauties, nor enforce the Truths—

Ther. Rise upon You, *Aspasio*, for your impolite Hint! Who can forbear interrupting the Harangue, which pleads for such an outrageous Violation of the *Mode*? Which would introduce reli-

gious Talk into our fashionable Assemblies!—How is it that You, who, in other Instances, are a Gentleman of Refinement, can be so strangely inelegant in this Particular?

Asp. For such a Practice, *Theron*, We have no inconsiderable Precedents.—Thus *Socrates* *, the wisest of the *Athenian* Sages; thus *Scipio* †, the most accomplished of the *Roman* Generals, conversed.—Thus *Cicero* ‡, the Prince of Orators, improved his elegant Retirement at the *Tusculan* Villa,—And *Horace* §, the brightest Genius in the Court of *Augustus*, formed the most agreeable Hours of his Conversation, upon this very Plan.

Was I to enumerate all the Patrons of this, forgive me if I say, *more honourable* Mode; the most illustrious Names of Antiquity, would appear on the List.

Ther. This Practice, however extolled by the philosophic Gentry of antient Times; would make a very singular Figure, in the present Age.

Asp. And should not the Copy, after which the Generality of Mankind write, be singularly correct? Persons of Taste and Distinction, are the Pattern for general Imitation: are the Copy, in Conformity to which, the World adjust their Manners,

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and

* Vid. *Socratis Memorabilia*, per *Xenoph.*

† See *Cicero's* Dialogue *De Amicitia*, in which we are informed, That it was a customary Practice with *Scipio*, with his polite Friend *Laelius*, and some of the most distinguished Nobility of *Rome*, to discourse upon the Interests of the Republic, and Immortality of the Soul.

‡ Vid. *Tuscul. Quest.*

§ Such were the Interviews, of which he speaks with a Kind of Rapture,

O Noctes Cœnaque Deum.

and regulate their Behaviour. *They*, therefore, are under the strongest Obligations, not to give a contemptible Stamp to the Fashion.—Benevolence to their Fellow-creatures calls loudly upon them, a Concern for the public Good challenges it at their Hands, that *they* signalize themselves by a Pre-eminence in all that is excellent.

Ther. Away, away with these austere Notions! Such a Strain of Conversation would *damp* the Gaiety of our Spirits, and *flatten* the Relish of Society. It would turn the Assembly into a Conventicle, and make it Lent all the Year round.

Asp. Can it then be an austere Practice, to cultivate the Understanding, and improve the Heart?—Can it damp the Gaiety of our Spirits, to refine and exalt them, after the Model of the highest Perfection?—Or, will it flatten the Relish of Society, to secure and anticipate everlasting Delights?

Ther. Everlasting Delights, *Assasio*!—To talk of such a Subject, would be termed, in every Circle of Wit and Gallantry, an Usurpation of the Parson's Office. A low Method, of retailing by Scraps, in the Parlour; what the Man in Black, vends by wholesale, from the Pulpit.—It would infallibly mark Us out for *Pedants*. And, for aught I know, might expose us to the Suspicion of *Enthusiasm*.

Asp. Your Men of Wit must excuse me, if I cannot persuade myself to admire, either the Delicacy of their Language, or the Justness of their Opinion. The first, be it ever so *humane* and *graceful*, I resign to themselves.—As for the other, I would beg Leave to inquire, “Are the Clergy, then, the *only* Persons, who should act the becoming Part, and converse like rational Beings? Is solid Wisdom, “and

“and sacred Truth, the Privilege of their Order?
 “While nothing is left for You and me, but the
 “Play of Fancy, or the Luxuries of Sense.”

I would farther ask the Circles of Gallantry;
 “Where is the Impropriety, of interweaving the
 “*noble* Doctrines, displayed by the Preacher, with
 “our common Discourse? Or, what the Incon-
 “venience, of introducing the *amiable* Graces,
 “recommended by his Lectures, into our ordinary
 “Practice?”

Will such an Exercise of our Speech, rank Us
 among Pedants? Is *this* the Badge of Enthusiasm?
 A splendid and honourable Badge truly! Such as
 must add Weight to any Cause, and Worth to any
 Character.

Ther. This would curb the sprightly Sallies of
 Wit; and extinguish that engaging Glow of Good-
 humour, which enlivens our genteel Intercourses.
 Accordingly, You may observe; That if any *for-*
mal Creature, takes upon Him to mention, in polite
 Company, an edifying Truth, or a Text of Scrip-
 ture; the pretty Chat, though ever so profusely
 flowing, stagnates in an Instant. Each voluble
 and facetious Tongue seems to be struck with a
 sudden Palsy. Every one wonders at the strange
 Man's Face; and they all conclude Him, either
mad, or a *Methodist*.

Asp. Agreeable Strokes of Wit, are by no Means
 incompatible with useful Conversation. Unless we
 mistake an *insipid Vivacity*, or *fantastical Levity*, for
 Wit and Facetiousness. — Neither have I heard, that,
 among all our Acts of Parliament, any one has passed
 to *divorce* Good Sense and Good-humour. Why
 may they not both reside on the same Lips, and both
 circulate

circulate through the same Assembly?—For my own Part, I would neither have our Discourse *soiled* with Austerity, nor *swagrate* into Impertinence: but unite (as a judicious Antient advises) the Benefits of Improvement, with the Blandishments of Pleasantry*.—And as to your polite People; if they can find more Music, in the Magpie's Voice, than in the Nightingale's Note; I must own myself as much surprised at *their* Ears, as they are at the strange Man's Face.

Ther. With all your grey-headed Authorities, I fancy, You will find very few Profelytes, among the Professors of modern Refinement. Fashion is, with the World, the Standard of Morals, as well as of Clothes. And He must be of a very *peculiar* Turn indeed, who would choose to be ridiculous in either.

Ass. Rather, *Theron*, He must be of a very *pleasant* Turn, who tamely delivers up his Conduct, to be moulded by a Fashion; which has neither true Elegance to dignify it, nor the least Usefulness to recommend it.

And which, I beseech You, is most ridiculous?—He, who servilely imitates every *idle* Fashion, and in the very *Age* of corrupt Custom?—Or He, who asserts his native Liberty; and resolutely follows, where Wisdom and Truth lead the Way.

Ther. Would you then obtrude religious Discourse, upon every Company? Consider, *Assusio*, what a motley Figure this would make.—A Wedding, and a Sermon!—Quadrille, and St. Paul!—The last new Play, and primitive Christianity!

Ass. I am not at all in the least surprised, that you should be so much surprised, at the same Time, and both together. *Quaquadam Illecebrâ ac Palustate utiles.* AUL. GEL.

Ass. Such Folly and Extravagance, would be hissed out of the commercial World. Why then are they admitted and cherished in the social ?

Ther. Why indeed ? He must be far more acute than your *Theron*, who can assign a single Reason to countenance them. To explode them, ten thousand Arguments occur.—A continual Round of gay and trifling Conversation *, of Visits quite modish, and Entertainments not moral, must give an indolent Turn to the Mind. Such as will *enervate* its Powers; and *sap* the very Foundation of Virtue.—Whereas, a frequent Conference on the Glories of the GODHEAD, or the Wonders of Creation, would invigorate and ennoble the Soul. Would enlarge her Faculties, and elevate her Desires.

Ass. Did not our Heart burn within us, said the Travellers at Emmaus, while HE talked with us, by the Way † ? Those Discourses, 'tis true, were conducted

* The Significancy and Importance of such Conversation, was smartly represented by the Philosopher. Who, being asked, How he left the Company employed, made Answer ; Some in milking the Ram, Others in holding the Pail.

† Luke xxiv. 32. An ingenious Friend has favoured me with a Criticism on this Passage, as it stands in the former Editions. It is there, through Inadvertence, printed *our Hearts*. By which Inaccuracy, he observes, the delicate and instructive Spirit of the Text is lost. The Pronoun should be a Plural; and the Noun, in the singular Number; and the Clause should run thus, *Did not our Heart burn ?* To denote the Unanimity, and (if I may so speak) the *Oneness* of true Believers. Whose Sentiments and Affections are as harmonious; as if *one Heart* subsisted in both; in all their Breasts. — This is, undoubtedly, a curious and refined Remark; whether it be equally judicious and solid, I submit to the Determination of the Reader. Whether He will allow it to express, by the Variation of a single Syllable, all that is implied in the Communion of Saints.

ducted with a Spirit, and enforced with an Energy, absolutely unequalled. Yet the same happy Effects would, in *some* inferior Degree, result from our friendly Conferences, if they turned upon the same important Points. We also should feel our Hearts, warmed with holy Zeal, and glowing with heavenly Love.

Ther. Such Conferences would not only be productive of present Advantage; but yield a renewed Pleasure, in the Retrospect. We might reflect, with real Complacency, on Hours spent in so rational a Manner. And who would not prefer the silent Applause of the Heart, far, far before those tumultuous Joys; which wanton Jests create, or the circling Glass inspires?

Ass. One*, who thoroughly knew Mankind, and had tried the Merits of the jovial Board, very pertinently compares such Flashes of Mirth, to the Crackling of Thorns under a Pot†. The transient Blaze of the One, and the senseless Noise of the Other, continue but for a Moment; and then expire, *that* in Smoke and Darknels, *this* in Spleen and Melancholy.

I said, Spleen and Melancholy. For, however jauntie and alert the various Methods of modish Trifling may seem, whatever Ease and Grace they are supposed to give the Conversation; sure I am, it will be afflictive, to look back upon Interviews, squandered away in very Vanity; and shocking, to look forward upon the Account, which We must all shortly render.—What Figure will such an Article make, in the final Reckoning, and at the decisive Bar? “Our social Hours, which might have pro-

* King Solomon. † Eccles. vii. 6.

"moted our mutual Edification, and been subser-
 "vient to our CREATOR's Glory, all lost in
 "Merriment and Whim; or worse than lost, in
 "Flattery and Detraction. A *Blank*, or a *Blat*!"

Then Venus, we find, has her zealous Knights-
 Errants, and *Bacchus* his professed Votaries, in al-
 most every Company. Is it not shameful and de-
 plorable, that the G.O.D. of Nature alone, has
 none to assert his Honour, none to celebrate his
 Perfections? Though He is the *Original* of all
 Beauty, and the *Parent* of all Good.

When I have taken my Morning Walk, amidst
 Trees and Flowers; with the Sun shedding Lustre
 round Him, and unveiling the happy Landscape;
 how has my Eye been charmed, with the lovely
 Prospect! How has my Ear been ravished, with the
 Music of the Grove! Methought, every Note was
 a *Tribute* of Harmony; and all Nature seemed one
 grand *Chorus*, swelling with the CREATOR's
 Praise. But, how has the Scene been reversed;
 when, leaving my rural Elysium, I entered the
 Haunts of Men! Where I saw Faculties divine,
 meanly engaged in Trifles. Where I heard the
 Tongue, prompt to utter, and fluent to express,
 every Thing but its MAKER's Glory.
 I assure you, I have often been chagrined on this
 Occasion; and sometimes said within myself—
 "What! Shall *Trifles* be regarded, and the MA-
 "JESTY of *Heaven* neglected? Shall every
 "Friend, shall every Visitant, receive his Share of
 "Respect? And no Acknowledgments be paid to
 "that incomprehensibly glorious BEING, who
 "is worthy more than worthy, of all our Vene-
 "ration?"

Thos. This will be still more afflictive to an ingenuous Mind, if we consider, That the infinite and eternal GOD is present at all our Interviews: vouchsafes to express his Satisfaction, and to acknowledge Himself magnified: yea, with Admiration and Love, We talk of his transcendent Excellencies. Nay: We are assured, that the LORD of all Lords, not only hearkens, but keeps a *Book of Remembrance*; and will distinguish such Persons, at the Day of universal Retribution. When the loose Train of incoherent Talkers, are driven away as the despicable *Chaff*, these shall be selected for his peculiar Favour, and numbered among the *Friends* of JEHOVAH.

Thos. If the Gentlemen, who make high Pretensions to Reason, think themselves discharged from these Doctrines of Revelation, they should not forget their own Scriptures. A Philosopher will tell them the Duty of employing their Time, as in the awful Presence, and under the immediate Inspection, of the Supreme BEING. An Orator will shew them the egregious Impropriety, of wasting their friendly Interviews, in the Fumies of Drollery, or the Froth of Impertinence.

Mal. iii. 16, 17. This is a Passage much to be observed. A most emphatical Recommendation of religious Discourse! Perhaps, the most emphatical, that ever was used; and the most endearing, that can possibly be conceived.

Sic certe vivendum est, tanquam in Conspectu auctoris: sic cogitandum, tanquam aliquis in Patris intima inspicere possit: & potest. Quid enim profit ab Homine aliquid esse secretum? Nihil Deo clausum est. Interest Animi nostris, & Cogitationibus mediis intervenit. SENECA, Epist. 83.

Cicero says, with an Air of graceful Indignation: Quasi vero clarorum Virorum aut tacitos Congressus esse oporteat, aut mutuos Sermones, aut Rerum Colloquia levisse.

Academ. Quæst. Lib. IV.

Asp. Who then, that is wise, would not habituate Himself to a Practice; which comes recommended by the Voice of Reason; and is enforced by the Authority of GOD? A Practice, which will administer *present Good*; will afford *pleasing Reviews*; and terminate in *everlasting Honour*?

Ther. 'Tis strange, that Subjects, which deserve to be received, as the universal Topic, are almost universally banished from our Discourse. Was this Cabinet enriched, with a Series of antique *Medals*, or a Collection of the finest *Gems*; my Friends would naturally expect to be entertained, with a Sight of those Rarities, and an Explanation of their Meaning. Why should we not as naturally expect, and as constantly agreed, to entertain each other with Remarks on those admirable Curiosities, which are deposited in the boundless *Museum* * of the Universe?

When a *General* has won some important Victory, or an *Admiral* has destroyed the Enemy's Fleet; every Company resounds with their Achievements; every Tongue is the Trumpet of their Fame. And why should We not celebrate, with equal Delight and Ardour, that ALMIGHTY Hand; which formed the Structure, and furnished the Regions, of this stupendous System?

Asp. Especially, if to his *immensely glorious*, We add his *supremely amiable* Perfections.—When the victorious Commander is our most cordial Friend: when He has professed the tenderest Love; done Us

Museum—Alluding to a remarkable Edifice in the City of Oxford, distinguished by this Name; and appropriated to the Reception of Curiosities, both natural and artificial.

the most signal Good; and promised Us a perpetual Enjoyment of his Favours; it will be impossible to neglect such an illustrious and generous Person. His Name must be engraven upon our Hearts; must slide insensibly into our Tongues; and be as Music to our Ears.

Is not all this true, and in the most supereminent Degree, with regard to the blessed G-O-D?—Can greater *Kindness* be exercised, or greater *Love* be conceived; than to deliver up his own SON to Torments and Death, for the Expiation of our Sins?—Can *Benefits*, more desirable, be granted; than to adopt Us for his Children; and sanctify Us by his S-P-I-R-I-T?—Can *Promises*, more invaluable, be made; than those, which insure to Us the Preferments of Heaven, and the Riches of Eternity?

All this is attested, concerning the Almighty MAJESTY, in the Scriptures of Truth. What a Fund, therefore, for pleasing and delicate Conversation, are the Scriptures?

Ther. Here also I have the Pleasure of concurring with my *Asspasia*. Though I believe, He suspects me to be somewhat wavering or defective, in my Veneration for the Scriptures.

Assp. No, *Theron*: I have a better Opinion of your Taste and Discernment, than to harbour any such Suspicion.

Ther. The Scriptures are certainly an inexhaustible Fund of Materials, for the most delightful and ennobling Discourse. When we consider the Author of those sacred Books,—that they came originally from *Heaven*—were dictated by *divine Wisdom*—have the same *consummate* Excellency, as the most finished Works of Creation.—It is really sur-

praising, that We are, not always teaching, by Study, by Meditation, or Conversation, into one or other of those grand Volumes.

Resp. Which Suffer preachers, or *Murray* pleads; the Church is crowded, and the Bar thronged. When *Spence* produces the Refinements of Criticism, or *Pope* displays the Graces of Poetry; the Press to-day, yet is scarce able to supply the Demands of the Public. Are We eager to hear, and impatient to purchase, what protects from such eloquent Tongues, and masterly Rhetoric? And can We be indolently indifferent, when it is not the most accomplished of Mankind—not the most exalted of Creatures—but the Adorable AUTHOR of all Wisdom, speaks in his revealed Word? Strange! that our Attention does not hang upon the venerable Accents, and our Talk dwell upon the incomprehensible Truths!

Ter. Indeed, I must confess, the very Language of the Bible. In this, methinks, I discern a Conformity, between the Book of Nature, and the Book of Scripture.

In the Book of Nature, the Divine TEACHER speaks not barely to our Ears, but to all our Senses. And it is very remarkable, how He varies his Address!—Observe his grander Works. In these, He uses the Style of Majesty. We may call it, the true Sublime. It strikes with Awe, and transports the Mind.

St. Luke, in his evangelical History, uses this beautiful Image, *Exequio*. The People hung upon the Lips of our TEACHER. *Luke xix. 48.* Which imports a very strong Idea, an attention, that nothing could interrupt—and an *Exequio*, that was not to be

Pendetque loquentis ab Ore.

Viro.

Mind.—View his ordinary Operations. Here, He descends to a plainer Dialect. This may be termed, the *familiar* Style. We comprehend it with Ease, and attend to it with Pleasure.—In the more ornamented Parts of the Creation, He clothes his Meaning with Elegance: All is rich and brilliant. We are delighted; we are charmed. And what is this, but the *florid* Style?

A Variety, somewhat similar, runs through the Scriptures.—Would You see *History*, in all her Simplicity, and all her Force; most beautifully easy, yet irresistibly striking? Set Her, or rather *feel* her Energy, touching the nicest Movements of the Soul; and triumphing over our Passions, in the inimitable Narrative of *Joseph's* Life. The Representation of *Esaú's* bitter Distress*; the Conversation-pieces of *Jonathan*, and his gallant Friend†; the memorable Journal of the Disciples going to *Emmaus*‡; are finished Models of the *Impassioned* and *Affecting*.—Here is nothing studied; no Flights of Fancy; no Embellishments of Oratory. Yet, how inferior is the Episode of *Nisus* and *Burialus*, though worked up by the most masterly Hand in the World, to the undissembled artless Fervency of these scriptural Sketches ||!

VOL. I. C most admirable Are

* Gen. xxvii. 30; Er. † 1 Sam. xviii, xix, xx.
‡ Luke xxiv. 13, &c.

|| Let a Person of true Taste, peruse, in a critical View, the two first Chapters of St. Luke. He will there find a Series of the most surprising Incidents, related with the greatest Simplicity, yet with the utmost Majesty.—All which, extremely affecting in themselves, are heightened and illuminated, by a judicious Intermixture of the sublimest Pieces of Poetry. For my own Part, I know not

Are We pleased with the Elevation and Dignity of an *Heroic Poem*; or the Tenderness and Perplexity of a *Dramatic Performance*? In the Book of *Job*, they are both united, and both unequal.—Conformably to the exactest Rules of Art, as the Action advances, the Incidents are more alarming, and the Images more magnificent. The Language glows, and the Pathos swells. Till, at last, the DEITY Himself makes his Entrance. He speaks from the Whirlwind, and summons the Creation: summons Heaven, and all its shining Host; the Elements, and their most wonderful Productions; to vouch for the Wisdom of his providential Dispensations.—His Word strikes Terror, and flashes Conviction: decides the momentous Controversy, and closes the august Drama, with all possible Propriety, Solemnity, and Grandeur.

If We sometimes choose a *plaintive Strain*; such as softens the Mind, and induces an agreeable Melancholy: are any of the antient Tragedies superior, in the Eloquence of Mourning, to *David's* pathetic Elegy on his beloved *Jonathan**; to his most passionate and inconsolable Moan †, over the lovely but unhappy

how to characterize them more properly, than by *Solomon's* elegant Comparison.—*They are as gold Rings set with the Beryl, or as bright Ivory over-laid with Sapphires.* Cantic. v. 14.

* 2 Sam. i. 19, &c.

† 2 Sam. xviii. 33. *The King was vehemently affected (127) and went up to the Chamber, and wept: and as He went, He said; O my Son Absalom! my Son, my Son Absalom! Would G O D, I had died for Thee! O Absalom, my Son, my Son!*—Such a Picture, and so much Pathos: so artless both, and both so exquisite; I must acknow-

unhappy *Absalom*; or to that melodious Woe, which warbles and bleeds, in every Line of *Jeremiah's* Lamentations?

Would we be entertained with the daring Sublimity of *Homer*, or the correct Majesty of *Virgil*? With the expressive Delicacy of *Horace*, or the rapid Excursions of *Pindar*? Behold them joined, behold them excelled, in the Odes of *Moses*, and the eucharistic Hymn of *Deborah*; in the exalted Devotion of the Psalms, and the glorious Enthusiasm of the Prophets.

Asp. Only with this Difference, that the former are *tuneful Triflers* *, and amuse the Fancy with

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empty

ledge, I never met with, among all the Representations of Dignity in Distress.—The King's Troops had gained a signal Victory. His Crown and his Life were rescued from the most imminent Danger. Yet all the Honours and all the Joys of this successful Day, were swallowed up and lost in the News of *Absalom's* Death.—The News of *Absalom's* Death struck, like a Dagger, the afflicted Father. He starts from his Seat. He hastens into Retirement, there to pour out his Soul in copious Lamentation. But his Anguish is too impetuous, to bear a Moment's Restraint. He bursts immediately into a Flood of Tears; and cries, as He departs, O *Absalom*, &c.

What says *Mexentius*, when his Son is slain? When, to sharpen his Sorrow, the pale Corpse, the miserable Spectacle, is before his Eyes, and within his Arms? The most pathetic Word He utters, is

—Heu! nunc misero mihi demum

Exilium infelix, nunc altè Fulnus adactum.

How languid is *Virgil*? How *inexpressive* the Prince of Latin Poetry! compared with the royal Mourner in *Israel*! Most evident, from this and many other Instances, is the Superiority of the Scriptures, in copying Nature, and painting the Passions.

* *Ludit amabiliter.*

empty Fiction: the latter are Teachers sent from GOD, and make the Soul *wise and Salvation*.—The Bible, is not only the brightest Ornament, but the most invaluable Depositum. On a right, a practical Knowledge of these lively Oracles, depends the present Comfort, and the endless Felicity of Mankind. Whatever, therefore, in Study or Conversation, has no Connection with their divine Contents; may be reckoned among the *Toys* of Literature, or the *Cyphers* of Discourse.

Ther. Here again the Book of Scripture, is somewhat like the Magazine of Nature. What can We desire, for our Accommodation and Delight, which this Store-house of Conveniences does not afford? What can We wish, for our Edification and Improvement, which that Fund of Knowledge does not supply? Of these We may truly affirm, each, in its respective Kind, *is profitable unto all Things*.

Are We Admirers of *Antiquity*?—Here, We are led back, beyond the universal Deluge, and far beyond the Date of any other Annals.—We are introduced among the earliest Inhabitants of the Earth. We take a View of Mankind, in their undisguised primitive Plainness; when the Days of their Life were but little short of a *thousand Years*.—We are brought acquainted with the Original of Nations; with the Creation of the World; and with the Birth of Time itself.

Are We delighted with *vast Achievements*?—Where is any Thing comparable to the Miracles in *Egypt*, and the Wonders in the Field of *Zaan*? To the Memoirs of the *Israelites*, passing through the Depths of the Sea; sojourning amidst the inhospitable Desarts; and conquering the Kingdom of *Canaan*?

naar?—Where shall we meet with Instances of martial Bravery, equal to the prodigious Exploits of the Judges; or the adventurous Deeds of Jesse's valiant Son, and his matchless Band of *Worthies**?—Here, We behold the fundamental Laws of the Universe, sometimes suspended, sometimes reversed: and not only the Current of *Jordan*, but the Course of Nature controuled. In short; when We enter the Field of Scripture, We tread—on *enchanted*, shall I say? rather—on *consecrated* Ground. Where Astonishment and Awe are awakened, at every Turn. Where is all, more than all, the Marvellous of Romance †; connected with all the Precision and Sanctity of Truth.

If We want *Maxims of Wisdom*, or have a Taste for the *Laconic Style*; how copiously may our Wants be supplied, and how delicately our Taste gratified! Especially in the Book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and some of the minor Prophets.—Here, are the most sage Lessons of Instruction; adapted to every Circumstance of Life; formed upon the Experience of all preceding Ages; and perfected by the unerring SPIRIT of Inspiration.—These delivered, with such remarkable Conciseness; that One might venture to say, every Word is a Sentence ‡; at least,

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every

* See 2 Sam. xxiii. 8, &c. 1 Chron. xi. 10, &c.

† ——— *Heroum Fabula veris
Vincitur Historiis.*

‡ What *Cicero* said of *Thucydides*, is more eminently true, concerning our royal Moralist, and his rich Collection of Ethics; concerning our evangelical Historians, and their copious Variety of Facts. *Eum adeo esse Rebus plenum, refertumque, ut prope Verborum Numerum Numero Re- rum aequet.*

every Sentence may be called an Apothegm; sparkling with Brightness of Thought, or weighty with Solidity of Sense. The Whole, like a Profusion of Pearls—*each* containing, in a very small Compass, a Value almost immense—all heaped up (as an ingenious Critic speaks) with a confused Magnificence, above the little Niceties of Order.

If We look for the *Strength* of Reasoning, and the *Warmth* of Exhortation: the *insinuating Arts* of genteel Address, or the *manly Boldness* of impartial Reproof: all the Thunder of the Orator, without any of his Ostentation; all the Politeness of the Courtier, without any of his Flattery:—let Us have Recourse to the Acts of the Apostles, and to the Epistles of St. Paul*. These are a *Specimen*, or rather these are the *Standard*, of them all.

I do not wonder, therefore, that a Taste so refined, and a Judgment so correct as *Milton's*, should discern higher Attractives in the Volume of Inspiration,

* Another very remarkable Instance of Propriety in St. Paul's Writings, is, That though *diffuse* in the *doctrinal*, they are *concise* in the *preceptive* Parts. On the former, it was absolutely necessary to enlarge. On the latter, it is always judicious to be short. The celebrated Rule of *Horace*,

Quicquid præcipies, esto brevis,

was never more exactly observed, nor more finely exemplified, than by our Apostolic Author. See that noble String of Precepts, *1 Thess. v. 16, 17, &c.*—See another choice Collection of the same Kind, *Rom. xii. 9, 10, &c.* In which the *Energy* of the Diction is no less admirable than the *Conciseness* of the Sentence. *Απορρητικῶς—κοινωνῶν—φιλοσοφῶν—ἐννοῶν—προκατασκευαστικῶς—διωκῶν*—are some of the most *vigorous* Words, that Language can furnish; and form the most *animated* Meaning, that Imagination can conceive.

ration, than in the most celebrated Authors of Greece and Rome.

————— Yet not the more

*Cease I to wander, where the Muses haunt
Clear Spring, or shady Grove, or sunny Hill,
Smit with the Love of sacred Song: but CHIEF
Thee Sion, and the flow'ry Banks beneath,
That wash thy hallowed Feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit †.*

Asp. Another Recommendation of the Scriptures, is, That they afford the most *awful* and most *amiable* Manifestations of the GODHEAD. His Glory shines, and his Goodness smiles, in those divine Pages, with unparalleled Lustre.—Here, We have a satisfactory Explanation of *our own* State. The Origin of Evil is traced; the Cause of all our Misery discovered; and the Remedy, the infallible Remedy, both clearly shewn, and freely offered.—The Merits of the bleeding JESUS, lay a firm Foundation for all our Hopes: while Gratitude for his dying Love, suggests the most winning Incitement to every Duty.—Morality, *Theron*, your (and let me add, *my*) admired Morality, is delineated in all its Branches. Is placed upon its proper Basis, and raised to its highest Elevation.—The SPIRIT of GOD is promised, to enlighten the Darkness of our Understandings, and strengthen the Imbecility of our Wills.

C 4

* That is, “ He still was pleased to study the Beauties of the antient Poets; but his highest Delight was in the Songs of *Sion*, in the holy Scriptures, and in these He meditated Day and Night.”

See Dr. Newton's Editt.

Wills. What an ample—Can you indulge me, on this favourite Topic?

Ther. It is, I assure You, equally pleasing to myself. Your Enlargements, therefore, need no Apology.

Ass. What ample Provision is made, by these blessed Books, for all our spiritual Wants! And, in this Respect, how indisputable is their Superiority to all other Compositions!

Is any One convinced of Guilt, as provoking Heaven, and ruining the Soul?—Let Him ask Reason, to point out a Means of Reconciliation, and a Refuge of Safety*. Reason hesitates, as She replies; “The DEITY *may*, perhaps, accept our Supplications, and grant Forgiveness.”—But the Scriptures leave Us not to the sad Uncertainty of Conjecture. They speak the Language of clear Assurance.

* The Sentiment, says an anonymous Writer, should have been thus worded; “Let the guilty Person ask his Pride.”—It might have been observed by this Writer, That the Words express the faintest Degree of Hope, rather than a real Persuasion; a Thing ardently wished, rather than truly believed;—*hesitates—may—perhaps*.

However, I am willing to acknowledge some Force and Propriety in the Remark. It is not Reason, but Pride under the Mask of Reason, which dictates every such Notion. Reason, unbiassed and impartial, would pronounce the Condition of sinful Man irremediable. That GOD, being infinitely holy, must abhor the polluted, and being infinitely just, would in no wise spare the guilty Creature.—It is the Gospel, the Gospel alone, which opens the Door of Hope. Opens it, from a most unexpected Quarter, the Redemption that is in CHRIST JESUS; and on poor forlorn Wretches, who sat in Darkness, and the Shadow of Death. Having no Glean of Consolation, from all that their own Wisdom could devise, or their own Ability perform.

Assurance. GOD has set forth a Propitiation *† He does forgive our Iniquities †: He will remember our Sins no more †.

Are We assaulted by Temptation, or *averse* to Duty?—Philosophy may attempt to parry the Thrust, or to stir up the reluctant Mind; by disclosing the Deformity of Vice, and urging the *Fitness* of Things. Feeble Expedients! Just as well calculated, to accomplish the Ends proposed; as the flimsy Fortification of a Cobweb, to defend Us from the Ball of a Cannon; or, as the gentle Vibrations of a Lady's Fan, to make a Wind-bound Navy sail.—The Bible recommends no such incompetent Succours. *My Grace*, says its Almighty AUTHOR, *is sufficient for Thee* †.—*Sin shall not have Dominion over You* §.—The great JEHOVAH, in whom is everlasting Strength, *He worketh in Us, both to will, and to do, of his good Pleasure* †.

Should We be visited with *Sickness*, or overtaken by any *Calamity*, the Consolation which *Plato* offers, is; That such Dispensations coincide with the universal Plan of Divine Government. *Virgil* will tell Us, for our Relief; That afflictive Visitants are, more or less, the unavoidable Lot of all Men. Another Moralist whispers in the dejected Sufferer's Ear, "Impatience adds to the Load: whereas, a calm Submission renders it more supportable."—Does the Word of Revelation dispense such *spiritless* and *fugitive* Cordials: No: Those sacred Pages inform Us, That Tribulations are fatherly Chastisements; Tokens of our MAKER's Love, and Fruits of

His
 * Rom. iii. 25. † Heb. viii. 3. ‡ Heb. viii. 12.
 ‡ 2 Cor. xiii. 9. § Rom. vi. 14. † Phil. ii. 13.

his Care. That they are intended to work *in Us*, the peaceable Fruits of Righteousness; and to work out *for Us*, an eternal Weight of Glory *.

Should We, under the Summons of *Death*, have Recourse to the most celebrated *Comforters* in the *Heathen World*; they would increase our Apprehensions, rather than mitigate our Dread. *Death* is represented, by the great Master of their Schools; as "The most formidable of all Evils." They were not able *positively* to determine, whether the Soul survived; and never so much as *dreamt* of the Resurrection of the Body.—Whereas, the Book of GOD strips the Monster of his Horrors, or turns Him into a Messenger of Peace: gives Him an Angel's Face, and a Deliverer's Hand. Ascertaining to the Souls of the Righteous, an immediate *Transluation* into the Regions of Bliss; and insuring to their Bodies, a most advantageous *Revival*, at the Restoration of all Things.

Invaluable Book! It heals the Maladies of Life, and subdues the Fear of Death. It strikes a light—
some

* 2 Cor. iv. 17. What are *all* the consolatory Expedients, prescribed in all the Volumes of *Heathen Morality*, compared with this *one* Recipe of Revelation? They are, in Point of cheering Efficacy, somewhat like the Froth on the Conflux of a thousand Streams, compared with a single Draught of *Homer's Nectar*. Which, He tells Us, was

Temper'd with Drugs of sov'reign Use t' assuage

The boiling Bosom of tumultuous Rage;

To clear the cloudy Front of wrinkled Care,

And dry the tearful Sluices of Despair.

Charm'd with that virtuous Draught, th' exalted Mind

All Sense of Woe delivers to the Wind.

Odyss. IV.

some Vista, through the Gloom of the Grave; and opens a charming, a glorious Prospect of Immortality in the Heavens.

These, with many other Excellencies peculiar to the Scriptures, One would imagine more than sufficient, to engage every sensible Heart in their Favour; and introduce them, with the highest Esteem, into every improved Conversation.—They had such an Effect upon the *finest* Genius, and *most accomplished* * Person, that former or latter Ages can boast. In-
somuch, that He made, while living, this public Declaration; and left it, when He died, upon everlasting Record—*How sweet are thy Words unto my Taste!*

* If we consider *David*, in the great Variety of his fine Qualifications—The Ornaments of his Person, and the far more illustrious Endowments of his Mind—The surprising Revolutions in his Fortune; sometimes, reduced to the lowest Ebb of Adversity; sometimes, riding upon the highest Tide of Prosperity—His singular Dexterity, in extricating Himself from Difficulties; and peculiar Felicity, in accommodating Himself to all Circumstances—The Prizes He won, as a youthful Champion; and the Victories He gained, as an experienced General—His masterly Hand upon the Harp, and his inimitable Talent for Poetry—The admirable Regulations of his royal Government, and the incomparable Usefulness of his public Writings—The Depth of his Repentance, and the Height of his Devotion—The Vigour of his Faith in the Divine Promises, and the Ardour of his Love to the Divine MAJESTY—If We consider these, with several other Marks of Honour and Grace, which ennoble the History of his Life; We shall see such an *Assemblage* of shining Qualities, as perhaps were never united in any *other* merely human Character.

This Observation was expunged. But, upon maturer Thoughts, it is offered to the Public. In order to convince a *polite* Reader, That the Love of the Scriptures, and the Exercise of Devotion, are by no Means the low Peculiarities of a *vulgar* Mind.

*Taste! Yea, sweeter than Honey unto my Mouth *.—O! how I love thy Law! It is my Meditation all the Day †.—Mine Eyes prevent the Night-watches, that I may be occupied in thy Precepts; and I will speak of thy Testimonies even before Kings ‡.—If David tasted so much Sweetness in a small, and that the least valuable, Part of the divine Word; how much richer is the Feast to Us! Since the Gospel is added to the Law, and the Canon of Scripture completed! Since (to borrow the Words of a Prophet) the LORD GOD has, now sealed up the Sum; has put the last Hand to his Work; and rendered it full of Wisdom, and perfect in Beauty ||.*

Ther. Another remarkable Peculiarity of the sacred Writings, just occurs to my Mind—The Method, of communicating Advice, or administering Reproof, by *Parables*. A Method, which levels itself to the lowest Apprehension, without giving Offence to the most supereilious Temper. Yet, is as much superior, to plain unornamented Precept; as the enlivened Scenes of a well-wrought Tragedy, are more impressive and affecting, than a simple Narration of the Plot.

Our LORD was asked, by a Student of the Jewish Law, *Who is my Neighbour?* Which implied another Question, *How is he to be loved?*—The Enquirer was conscious of Himself; yet, ignorant of the Truth, and deficient in his Duty. Had the wise INSTRUCTOR of Mankind abruptly declared, *You neither know the former, nor fulfil the latter.* Probably,

* Psal. cxix. 103.
cxix. 46.

† Psal. cxix. 97.
|| Ezek. xxviii. 12.

‡ Psal.

bably, the Querist would have reddened with Indignation, and departed in a Rage.—Therefore, to teach, and not disgust; to *convince* the Man of his Error, and not *exasperate* his Mind; the blessed *JESUS* frames a Reply, as amiable in the Manner, as it was pertinent to the Purpose.

A certain *Jew*, going down from *Jerusalem* to *Jericho*, fell among Thieves *. They rise Him of his Money; strip Him of his Clothes; wound Him with great Barbarity; then leave Him, expiring on the Road.—Soon after this disastrous Accident, a Traveler appears, and advances that Way. A Sight, inexpressibly welcome to this afflicted Creature. What renders it more likely, that He shall receive Relief, this Traveler is one of the *holy Order*. One, who taught others the lovely Lessons of Humanity and Charity; and was, therefore, under the strongest Obligations, to exemplify them in his own Practice. He just glances an Eye upon the deplorable Object; sees Him stretched on the Ground, and weltering in his Blood. But takes no farther Notice. Nay, to avoid the Trouble of an Enquiry, turns out of the Road, and passes by on the other Side.—Scarcely was He departed, when a *Levite* approaches. This Man *comes nearer*, and looks on the miserable Spectacle. He takes a leisurely and attentive Survey of the Case †. Though every Gash, and every Groan, plead for Compassion; this Minister of the Sanctuary observes all, with the coldest

* Luke x. 30, &c.

† This seems to be the Import of *αὐτὸν ἰδὼν*. Luke x. 32. This *discovers* the Conduct of the two unnatural Passengers, and *heightens* the Description of Jewish Inhumanity.

coldest Indifference. He neither moves a Hand to help Him; nor speaks a Word to comfort Him; but leaves the poor, naked, mangled Wretch to perish in his Calamity.—Last comes a *Samaritan* *;

one
 * If this was a Parable, we cannot but admire the Accuracy of our LORD, both in laying the Scene, and selecting the Circumstances.—It is the Maxim of a great Critic,

Ficta Voluptatis Causa fuit proxima veris.

And how very apparent is the Air of Probability, in this sacred Apologue!—The Way from Jerusalem to Jericho, lying through a Desert, was much infested by Thieves, and too commodious for their Purposes of Violence.—What could be more likely to happen, than the Passage of a Priest and Levite along that Road? Since Jericho was a City, appropriated to the Levitical Order; and contained no less than twelve thousand Attendants, on the Service of the Temple.

How judiciously is the principal Figure circumstanced!—Had the Calamity befallen a Samaritan, it would have made but feeble Impressions of Pity; and those, perhaps, immediately effaced by stronger Emotions of Hatred. But, when it was a Jew, that lay bleeding to death; the Representation was sure to interest the Hearer in the Distress, and awaken a tender Concern.—Had the Relief been administered by a Jew, the Benevolence would have shone, but in a much fainter Light.. Whereas, when it came from the Hands of a Samaritan, whom all the Jews had agreed to execrate, and rank with the very Fiends of Hell, how bright was the Lustre of such Charity!

It was most charmingly, and indeed irresistibly bright, since it compelled a Jewish Lawyer, to acknowledge the superior Excellence of a despised and hated Samaritan. Nay, it compelled Him to acknowledge the Superiority of this hated Samaritan, not only to his Countrymen in general, but to those who bore the most venerable Character, and discharged the most sacred Office.

Let the Reader consider the Temper, expressed in that rancorous Reflection; *Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a Devil;*

one of the abhorred Nation ; whom the *Jew* hated with the most implacable Malignity. Though the *Levite* had neglected a bleeding Brother : though the Priest had with-held his Pity, from one of the LORD's peculiar People ! the very Moment this *Samaritan* sees the unhappy Sufferer, He melts into Commiseration. He forgets the *imbittered* *Foe*, and considers only the *distressed* *Fellow-creature*. He springs from his Horse, and resolves to intermit his Journey. The Oil and Wine, intended for his own Refreshment, He freely converts into healing Unguents. He binds up the Wounds ; sets the disabled Stranger, upon his own Beast ; and with all the Affiduity of a Servant, with all the Tenderness of a Brother, conducts Him to an Inn.—There, He does all that can be contrived *, to soothe his present Sorrows, and to provide against his future Wants. He lays down, for his immediate Use, what Money He can spare ; charges the Host to omit nothing, that may promote the Recovery or Comfort

Devil, John viii. 48.—Let Him compare that inveterate Malevolence, with the benign and compassionate Spirit of our amiable Traveler.—Then, let Him say ; Whether He ever beheld a finer or a bolder Contrast ? Whether, upon the Whole, He ever saw the *Ordonnance* of descriptive Painting, more justly designed, or more happily executed ?

I would beg Leave to observe farther, That the virulent Animosity of the *Jew* discovers itself, even in the Lawyer's Reply ; *He that showed Mercy on Him*. He will not so much as name the *Samaritan*. Especially in a Case, where He could not be named, without an honourable Distinction.—So strongly marked, and so exactly preserved, are the *raab*, the *Manners* or distinguishing Qualities of each Person, in the sacred Narrations !

Comfort of his Guest; and promises, to defray the whole Expence of his Lodging, his Maintenance, and his Cure.

What a lively Picture this, of the most *disinterested* and *active* Benevolence! A Benevolence, which excludes no Persons, not even Strangers or Enemies, from its tender Regards. Which disdains no Condescension, grudges no Cost, in its Labours of Love. — Could any Method of Conviction have been more feasible, and at the same Time more pleasing, than this Interrogatory, proposed by our LORD, and deduced from the Story? *Which one of these Three, thinkest Thou, was Neighbour unto Him, that fell among the Thieves?* — Oh, can there be an Advice, more suitable to the Occasion; more important in its Nature; and expressed with a more sententious Energy, than *Go Thou, and do likewise*? — In this Case, the Learner instructs, the Delinquent condemns [†], Himself. Bigotry hears away its Prejudice; and Pride (when the Moral is sweetly, so imperceptibly insinuates) even Pride itself lends a willing Ear to Admonition.

App. This Eloquence of Similitudes, is at once affecting to the Wise, and intelligible to the Ignorant. — It *shows* [†], rather than *relates*, the Point to be illustrated; and often makes, as in the fine Instance You have selected, the Feelings of the Heart overcome the Prejudices of the Understanding. — It has always been admitted, by the best Judges of Human Nature, and polite Literature. But, never was carried to its highest Perfection, till our LORD spoke

[†] *Sam. xii. 5.*

[†] *Dissonant*, says *Seneca* upon the Subject, *U audient in rem præsentem adducunt.* *Epist. lix.*

spoke the Parable of the *Prodigal* *.—Which has a Beauty, that no Paraphrase can brighten: a Perspicuity, that renders all Interpretation needless: and a Force, which every Reader, not totally insensible, must feel †.

Ther. The Condescension and Goodness of GOD are, every where, conspicuous.—In the Productions of the Bough, He conveys to Us the most valuable Fruits, by the Intervention of the loveliest Blossoms. Though the Present is, in itself, extremely acceptable; He has given it an *additional Endearment*, by the Beauties which array it, or the Perfumes which surround it.—In the Pages of Revelation, He has communicated to Us the Truths of Heaven, adorned with all the Graces of Composition. Such as may polish the Man of Genius; and improve the Man of Worth. Such as gratify and captivate our Imagination, even while they cultivate and refine our Morals.—So that they really are, as one of their divine Authors very elegantly speaks; *Like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver* †.

VOL. I.

D

Asp.

* Luke xv. 11, &c.

† If the Reader should be dissatisfied with this Method of extolling the Parable in general, without specifying its particular Beauties; He may find something of the latter Kind attempted, in *Contemplations on the Starry Heaven*, Pag. 181, &c.

‡ *Prod. xxx. 11.*—*Theron* follows the received Translation: I should prefer the Exposition of *Glossius*; who supposes *qds in retibus* to signify, *Reticula ornamenta, in quibus Oculi sunt minutissimi, penetrabiles tamen Visu.* According to this Interpretation, the Passage will present Us with *Apples of Gold in Net-work, or Lattice-work, of Silver.* Where the fine Fruit receives a new Charm, by shewing itself through the elegant Apertures of the Basket.

Ass. Who then would not gladly receive that gracious Exhortation? *Let the Word of CHRIST dwell in You richly* *. Who would not willingly obey that benign Command? *Thou shalt talk of it, when thou sittest in thine House, and when thou walkest by the Way; when thou liest down, and when thou risest up* †. Since, in this Case, Duty is evidently inlaid with Delight.

When I consider the *Language* of the Scriptures, and sometimes experience their Energy on my Soul; I am inclined to say—"Other Writings, though polished with the nicest Touches of Art, only tinkle on the Ear, or affect Us like the Shepherd's Reed. But these, even amidst all their Simplicity and Negligence, strike—alarm—transport Us—somewhat like the Voice of Thunder, or the Archangel's Trumpet."

When I consider the *Contents* of the Scriptures; and believe myself interested, in the Promises they exhibit, and the Privileges they confer; I am induced to cry out—"What are all the other Books in the World, compared with these inestimable Volumes? No more than an entertaining Novel, or a few prudential Rules for domestic Oeconomy, compared with a Parent's Will; a royal Charter;

* Col. iii. 16, *The Word of CHRIST*; so the Apostle entitles the whole inspired Writings, and thereby asserts the Divinity of his MASTER—*Dwell*; not make a short Stay, or an occasional Visit, but take up a fixed and stated Residence—*Richly*; in the largest Measure, and with the greatest Efficacy; so as to fill the Memory, sway the Will; and actuate all the Affections;

† Deut. vi. 7,

“ Charter *; or an imperial Grant of Titles and
“ Manors.”

I said, *Promises and Privileges.* For, these I
look upon as imparting the most sovereign Worth
to the Scriptures.— Agreeably to our LORD’s
Testimony, *Search the Scriptures.* Why? What
recommends them to our attentive Regard? Be-
cause they give the noblest Display of the divine
Perfections, and the truest Estimate of human Na-
ture? Because they open the invisible World, and
discover the Secrets of Eternity? Present Us with
the most refined Rule of Duty, and press upon Us
the most forcible Motives to Obedience!—All this
they unquestionably do. Yet this is not their most
distinguishing Excellence. *Search them,* says our
blessed LORD, with a close, an exact, an un-
wearied Assiduity; because, *they testify of ME.*
Of my all-surpassing Dignity, and infinite Merits.
Of free Justification through my Blood, and ever-
lasting Life through my Righteousness. This is
their crowning Perfection. From hence they de-
rive the most exalted Merit.

D 2

All

* The Contents of the Scripture are called, by the
wise Man, דברים *Prov. viii. 6. Excellent Things, royal*
Truths, princely Sentiments. Testifying of *Messiah the*
Prince, his Person, Righteousness, and Salvation.—Ex-
ceeding all the Works and Writings of the Learned, as
much as *Solomon* Himself, when seated on his Throne of
Ivory and Gold; surrounded with all the Splendour of
his brilliant Court; and delivering the Dictates of In-
spiration, to listening Sages—as much as that magni-
ficent Monarch, in such Circumstances of Dignity, and
amidst such Displays of Wisdom, exceeded the Populace
of *Israel.*

All these Circumstances remind me of a very emphatical Attestation, bore to the exalted Merit of the BRIDE. Which, though quite *artless*, is, I think, abundantly more expressive, than the most laboured Efforts of Panegyric.—It came from the Lips of a Martyr. Who, being condemned to die, for his inviolable Adherence to the Doctrines of Scripture; when he arrived at the Stake, and had composed Himself for Execution, took his final Leave in these affecting Words: “Farewel Sun
“ and Moon! Farewel all the Beauties of Crea-
“ tion, and Comforts of Life! Farewel my ho-
“ noured Friends! Farewel my beloved Relations!
“ And farewel thou *precious, precious Book of*
“ GOD!”

Aspasio had scarce uttered the last Sentence, when a Servant came to let them know; “Supper was
“ upon the Table.”—Very opportunely, said *The-ron*, has our Repast waited, till our Conference is ended. We have shewed, what a large Field of delightful Speculation, the Scriptures open; and what ample Materials for the most refined Discourse *, they afford. As nothing can be more ungraceful, than to neglect in *our own* Conduct,

what
* Should the serious Reader want any *farther* Persua-
sives, to this most beneficial Practice; He may see—
How particularly our Divine MASTER *observes* the
Strain of our Conversation; *Luke xxiv. 17.*—How ex-
pressly He has commanded such social Communications,
as may tend to the *Use of Edifying*, *Eph. iv. 29.*—And
what an *Evidence* will arise from this Article, either for
our Acquittal or Condemnation, at the Day of everlast-
ing Judgment, *Matt. xii. 36, 37.*

tionable.

Οι γὰρ ἱερὲς παιδεύουσιν καὶ ἀδίδακτοι, ἐκθροισοῦν καὶ ἀσχε-
τῶν, καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἐπιβλητῶν, ταῦτα ἐν ἡμετέροις αὐτοῖς φανῶν.
Chrysost. Ἀνθ. β.

—Gentle flowing in their stream,
 And gliding through one Garden—there they rest
 And flourish in the sun and air, and in the
 sweet and pleasant odors of the flowers,
 and Moon, Fairwell all the Beauties of Creation,
 and the Mountains, Mountains, Mountains, Mountains,

Several conditions for them know was appropriate when

[illegible]

...of our generation for activity.—How ex-
actly the present generation has been com-
municated to the world, and how it has
been communicated to the world, is a
question which is not only of great im-
portance to the world, but also of great
importance to the world.

...D.3...D.1A...
...D.3...D.1A...
...D.3...D.1A...
...D.3...D.1A...

[illegible]



DIALOGUE II.

THE next Morning, when Breakfast was over, *Theron* and *Aspasio* took a Walk into the Garden—Their Spirits cheared, and their Imagination lively—Gratitude glowing in their Hearts, and the whole Creation smiling round them.

The Spot adjoining to the House, was appropriated to the Cultivation of *Flowers*.—In a Variety of handsome Compartments, were assembled the choicest Beauties of blooming Nature. Here, the *Hyacinth* hung her silken Bells, or the *Lilies* reared their silver Pyramids. There, stood the neat *Narcissus*, loosely* attired in a Mantle of snowy Lustre; while the splendid *Ranunculus* wore a full-trimmed Suit of radiant Scarlet. *Pinks* were rising to enamel the Borders; *Roses* were opening to dress the Walls; surrounded, on all Sides, with a Profusion of beautiful Forms, either latent in the Stalk, or bursting the Buds, or blown into full Expansion.

This was bounded by a slight Partition; a Sort of verdant Parapet. Through which they descend by

————— *Hiantem Flore decore*
Narcissum.

an easy Flight of Steps; and are presented with the elegant Simplicity of the *Kitchen-Garden*.—In one Place, You might see the Marigold flowering, or the Beans in Blossom. In another, the Endive curled her Leaves, or the Lettuce thickened her Tufts. Cauliflowers sheltered their fair Complexion, under a green Umbrella; while the Borage dishevelled * her Locks, and braided them with native Jewels, of a finer Azure than the finest Sapphires.—On the sunny Slopes, the Cucumber and Melon lay basking in the collected Beams. On the raised Beds, the Artichoke seemed to be erecting a Standard, while the Asparagus shot † into Ranks of Spears. The level Ground produced all Manner of cooling Sallets and nourishing Esculents. Which, like the Brows of the Olympic Conquerors, were bound with a Fillet of unfading Parsley; or, like the Pictures of the Mountain-Nymphs, were graced with a Chaplet of fragrant Marjoram.—In short, nothing was wanting to furnish out the wholesome Luxury of an *Antediluvian Banquet*.

Soon, a high Wall intervenes. Through which a Wicket opens, and transmits them into the regular and equi-distant Rows of an Orchard.—This Plantation is so nicely adjusted, that it looks like an Arrangement of rural Piazzas, or a Collection of diversified Vistas. The Eye is, every where, entertained with the exactest Uniformity; and darts, with unob-

D 4

structed

* Referring to the loose irregular Manner of its Foliation.

† Alluding, not only to the Shape, but also to the Growth of this Plant; which is so unusually quick, that it may almost be said to *start*, rather than to *rise* out of the Earth,

fructed Ease, from one End of the branching Files to the other. — On all the Boughs, lay a lovely Evolution of *Blossoms*; arrayed in milky White, or tinged with the softest Red. Crouding into one general Cluster, without relinquishing a vacant Space for Leaves, they formed the fairest, the gayest, the grandest Alcove, that Fancy itself can imagine. — It is really like the Court of the *Graces*. None can approach it, without finding his Ideas brightened, and feeling his Temper exhilarated.

Contiguous to this correct Disposition of Things, Nature has thrown a *Wilderness*; hoary, grotesque, and magnificently confused. It stretched itself, with a large circular Sweep, to the North; and secured both the Olitory and the Orchard from incommoding Winds. — Copies of Hazel, and flowering Shrubs, filled the lower Spaces. While Poplars quivered aloft in Air, and Pines pierced the Clouds with their leafy Spires. Here, grew Clumps of Fir, clad in everlasting Green. There, stood Groves of Oak, which had weathered, for Ages, the wintry Storm. — This woody Theatre, was intersected by a *winding Walk*; lined with Elms of insuperable Height. Whose Branches, uniting at the Top, reared a majestic Arch, and projected a solemn Shade. It was impossible to enter this lofty Labyrinth, without being struck with a pleasing Dread*. As they proceed, every Inflection diffuses a deeper Gloom, and awakens a more pensive Attention.

Having strolled in this darksome Avenue, without a Speck of Sunshine, without a Glimpse of the Heavens; on a sudden, they step into open Day. — Surprising!

* *Caligantem nigra Formidant Lucum.*

prising cries *Appasio*. What a Change is this! What delightful Enchantment is here!—One Instant, whelmed in *Trophonius's Cave*, where Darkness hours, and Horror frowns; Transported the next, into the romantic Scenes of *Arcadia*, where all is lightsome, and all is gay.—Quick as Thought†, the Arches of Heaven expand their Azure. Turrets and Spires shoot into the Skies. Towns, with their spacious Edifices, spread themselves to the admiring View. Those Lawns, green with freshest Herbage; those Fields, rich with undulating Corn; where were they all, a Moment ago?—It brings to my Mind that remarkable Situation of the Jewish Law-giver; when, elevated on the Summit of *Pisgah*, He surveyed the goodly Land of Promise—surveyed the Rivers, the Floods, the Brooks of Honey and Butter—surveyed the Mountains dropping with Wine, and the Hills flowing with Milk.

* The Reader may find a curious Account of this Cave, together with a very humorous, and (which should always accompany Humour, or else it will be like a Sting without the Honey) an improving Description of its Effects. *Spect.* Vol. VIII. N^o 598, 599.

† Such a sudden Alteration of the Prospect, is beautifully described by Milton;

As when a Scout,
Through dark and desert Ways, with Peril gone
All Night, at last by Break of chearful Dawn
Obtains the Brow of some high-climbing Hill,
Which to his Eye discovers unaware
The goodly Prospect of some foreign Land,
First seen; or some renowned Metropolis,
With glistening Spires and Pinnacles adorn'd,
Which now the rising Sun gilds with his Beams

Milk *.—Surveyed all with those Eyes, which, for forty tedious Years, had been confined to dry Sands, ragged Rocks, and the irksome Wastes of a desolate howling Wilderness.

On the first *mossy Hillock* †, which offered its Couch, our Gentlemen seated themselves. The rising Sun had visited the Spot, to dry up the Dews, and exhale the Damps, that might endanger Health; to open the Violets, and expand the Primroses, that decked the Green. The whole Shade of the Wood was collected *behind* them; and a beautiful, extensive, most diversified Landscape spread itself *before* them.

Theron, according to his usual Manner, made many improving Remarks on the Prospect, and its Furniture. He traced the Footsteps of an all-comprehending Contrivance, and pointed out the Strokes of inimitable Skill. He observed the grand Exertions of Power, and the rich Exuberance of Goodness, most signally, most charmingly conspicuous through the Whole.—Upon one Circumstance He enlarged, with a particular Satisfaction.

Ther. See! *Aspasio*; how all is calculated, to administer the highest *Delight* to Mankind.—Those Trees

* This is the Language of the Book of *Job*, and the Prophecy of *Joel*. A Language, like the Scene it describes, not beautiful only, but beautiful and rich even to *Luxuriancy*, *Job* xx. 17. *Joel* iii. 18.—One would almost suspect, the *Lyric Poet* had read these Passages, and attempted an Imitation of their Delicacies.

Vinique Fontem, Lactis & uberes

Cantare Rivos, atque truncis

Lapsa cavis iterare Mella.

Lib. II. Od. 19.

† *Horace* would have called it, *Cespes fortuitus*.

Trees and Hedges, which skirt the Extremities of the Landscape; stealing away from their real Bulk, and lessening by gentle Diminutions; appear like elegant Pictures in *Miniature*. Those, which occupy the nearer Situations, are a Set of noble Images; swelling upon the Eye, in *full Proportion*; and in a Variety of graceful Attitudes. Both of them ornamenting the several Apartments of our common Abode, with a Mixture of Delicacy and Grandeur.

The Blossoms, that array the Branches; the Flowers, that embroider the Mead; address and entertain our Eyes with every Charm of Beauty*. Whereas, to other Creatures, they are destitute of all those Attractives; which result from a Combination of the loveliest Colours, and most alluring Forms.—Yonder Streams, that glide, with smooth Serenity,

* Therefore, when the Prophet describes the Christian Church, adorned with all the *Beauties of Holiness*, He borrows his Imagery from these amiable Objects. *Israel shall bud and blossom*, *Isai. xxvii. 6.*—Nay, the very *Wildernesses*, even the Gentile Nations, being converted unto *CHRIST*, *shall blossom as a Rose*, *Isai. xxxv. 1.*—*I will be as the Dew unto Israel; He shall blossom as the Lily, and cast forth his Roots as Lebanon*, *Hos. xiv. 5.* What an elegant Picture! And what a comfortable Promise! Here is the Queen of Flowers, and the Prince of Trees. Nothing fairer than the full-blown Lily: nothing firmer than the deep-rooted Cedars. Yet these are a Representation (and but a faint Representation) of the *Comeliness*, which the All-gracious REDEEMER puts upon his People; and of the *Stability*, which they derive from his inviolable Faithfulness.

N. B. The fourteenth of *Hosea*, is one of those Chapters, which, for their peculiar Importance and Excellency, deserve not only to have a Turn in our Reading, but a Place in our Memory.

Serenity, along the Vallies; glittering to the distant View, like Sheets of polished Silver; or soothing the attentive Ear, with the Softness of aquatic Murmurs; are no less *exhilarating* to the Fancy, than to the Soul, through which they pass.—The huge enormous Mountain; the steep and dizzy Precipice; the pendent Horrors of the craggy Promontory: wild and tremendous as they are, furnish out an agreeable Entertainment to the human Mind; and *please*, even while they *terrify*. Whereas, the Beasts take no other Notice of those majestic Deformities, than only to avoid the Dangers, they threaten.

Asp. How do such Considerations exalt our Idea of the CREATOR's Goodness; his very distinguishing Goodness to Mankind! Should they not proportionably endear that eternal Benefactor; and render Him, both the supreme Desire of our Souls, and the supreme Delight of our Affections?

His ever-bountiful Hand has scattered Blessings, and with profuse Liberality, among *all* the Ranks of animated Existence. But his Beneficence to *Us*, is of the most engaging Kind; is of a very superior Order. *We* are treated as his peculiar Favourites; being admitted to the Knowledge of his Designs, as well as to the Use of his Works. We are introduced to Scenes of Beauty, which none but Ourselves are able to discern. We are presented with a Series of Gratifications, which none but Ourselves are capable of relishing.

Ther. Another Remark, though very obvious, is equally important. The Destination of all these external Things, is no less *advantageous*, than their Formation is beautiful.—The Bloom, which en-

pages the Eye with its delicate Hues, is cherishing the Embrio Fruit; and forming, within its silken Folds, the Rudiments of a future Desert.—Those streams, which shine from afar, like fluid Crystal, are more valuable in their Productions, and beneficial in their Services, than they are amiable in their Appearance. They distribute, as they roll along their winding Banks, Cleanliness to our Houses, and Fruitfulness to our Lands. They nourish; and at their own Expence, a never-failing Supply of the finest Fish. They visit our Cities, and attend our Wharfs, as so many public Vehicles, ready to set out at all Hours.

Those Sheep, which give their Udders to be drained by the busy frisking Lambs, are fattening their Flesh for *our* Support; and while they fill their own Fleeces, are providing for *our* comfortable Clothing.—Yonder Kine, some of which are browsing upon the tender Herb; others, satiated with Pasturage, ruminate under the shady Covert; are, though conscious of no such Design, concocting for our Use, one of the softest, purest, healthiest Liquors in the World.—The Bees, that fly humming about our Seat, and pursue their Work on the fragrant Blossoms, are collecting Balm and Sweetness, to compose the richest of Syrups. Which, though the Produce of *their* Toil, is intended for *our* Good.

Nature, and her whole Family, are our obsequious Servants, our ever-active Labourers. They bring the Fruits of their united Industry, and pour them into our Lap, or deposit them in our Store-rooms.

Alp. Who can sufficiently admire this most charming and immense Benignity?—The Supreme DISPOSER of Events, has commanded Delight and Profit

Profit to walk Hand in Hand, through his ample Creation. Making all Things for perfectly pleasing, as if Beauty was their only End; yet all Things so eminently serviceable *, as if Usefulness had been their sole Design.—As a farther Invitation to our Gratitude, He has rendered Man the Center, in which all the Emanations of his Beneficence, diffused through this Terrestrial System, constantly terminate.

But, my dear *Theron*, is not this apparent, in a much more wonderful Manner, throughout the whole Oeconomy of REDEMPTION?—It were a small Thing for this inferior Class of unintelligent Creatures, to be continually employing themselves for our Benefit. Even the SON of the most High GOD, through all his incarnate State, acted the very same Part.—He took Flesh, and bore the Infirmities of human Nature, not for Himself, but for Us Men, and our Salvation. He suffered Want, and endured Misery in all its Forms; that We might possess the Fulness of Joy, and abound in Pleasures for evermore.—When He poured out his Soul in Agonies, under the Curse of an avenging Law; was it not with a compassionate View, to make Us Partakers of eternal Blessedness? When He fulfilled, perfectly fulfilled the whole commanding Law; was it not for this gracious Purpose, that his Righteousness might be imputed to Us? Yes;

For Us He liv'd,
Toil'd for our Ease, and for our Safety bled.

Nothing in the whole Course — *Ther.*

Omnes Mundi Partes ita constitutæ sunt, ut neque ad Usam meliores esse poterint, neque ad Speciem pulchriores.

Cic. De Nat. Deor. Lib. II.

Ther. Pardon me for interrupting You, *Assaph*. I have no Objection to the general Drift of your Discourse. But that particular Notion of *imputed* Righteousness, has always appeared to me in a very ridiculous Light. And I must say, that such a *Puritanical Nostrum* makes a very unbecoming Figure, amongst your other manly and correct Sentiments of Religion.

Assp. You know, *Theron*, I have long ago disavowed that ignoble Prejudice, which rejects Doctrines, or despises Persons, because they happen to be branded with contemptible Names. 'Tis true, the Writers styled *Puritans*, are remarkable for their Attachment to this Peculiarity of the Gospel. It runs through all their Theological Works; and very eminently distinguishes them, from the Generality of our modern Treatises.—But, must it *therefore* be wrong, because maintained by that particular Set of People? Or, are they the *only* Advocates for this important Truth?

Ther. Aye: it is as I suspected. I have lately conjectured, from several Hints in my *Assaph's* Discourse, that He has been warping to the low gentleman-like Peculiarities of those whimsical Fanatics.

Assp. I cannot conceive, why You should call them *whimsical*.—To settle Faith on its proper Basis, the meritorious Righteousness of the REDEEMER; and to deduce Obedience from its true Origin, the Love of GOD shed abroad in the Heart.—To search the Conscience, and convince the Judgment—To awaken the lethargic, and comfort the afflicted Soul—To do all this, from a thorough Knowledge, joined to a masterly Application,

Application, of the divine Word—These, sure, are not whimsical Talents, but *real* Excellencies. Yet these, if We may credit History, entered into the Preaching; these, if We will examine impartially, are to be found in the Writings of the Puritans.—And a Pearl, you will please to remember, is a Pearl still, though it should hang in the *Ethiopian's* Ear.

Ther. *Ethiopian* indeed! You have truly characterized, that *demure* and *gloomy* Generation. I hope, You don't intend to introduce their affected Solemnity and forbidding Reserve, into your own easy and engaging Conversation. Though, for aught I can judge, this would be no more ungraceful, than to patch such awkward and antiquated Notions, on the refined Scheme of Christianity.

Ass. My dear Friend, You are too ludicrous; and I begin to catch the Infection. Away with your Wit, I beseech You. Or, if You must have it in your Retinue, let it be your Page, not your Privy-Counsellour. Let it wait at the Door, not preside at our Councils.—We had better return to our first Topic. Let us contemplate the Wonders of Creation; and as We admire the Works, learn to adore the MAKER.

Ther. None of your Evasions, good *Aspasio*. You must not think to put me off at this Rate. I have wanted an Opportunity to rally you upon this Head; and to argue or laugh You, out of these *religious Additions*.

Ass. If You will not agree to Terms of Peace; I hope, you will allow some Cessation of Arms. At least, till I can muster my Forces, and prepare for the Vindication of my Principles.

Ther.

Ther. No! upon the Spot, and out of Hand, You are required to answer for yourself, and these same queer Opinions.—I shall serve You, as the *Roman* Consul * served the *procrastinating* Monarch †. When, demurring about his Reply to the Demands of the Senate, He said, “He would consider of the Matter:” the resolute Ambassador, drew a Circle round him with his Cane, and insisted upon a positive Answer, before he stepped over those Limits.

Assp. This, however, You must give me Leave to observe, That the Affair is of a very serious Nature. Upon Condition, that you will dismiss your Flourishes of Humour, and Strokes of Satyr; I will acquaint You with the Reasons, which have made me a Convert to this Doctrine.—Once, I held it in the utmost Contempt; and pitied the Simplicity of (as I then styled them) its *deluded* Admirers. But, I am now become *such* a Fool, that I may be truly wise, and substantially happy. I have seen my ruined State; and I bless GOD for this sovereign Restorative. It is the Source of my strongest Consolations, and the very Foundation of my eternal Hopes.

Ther. Excuse me, *Aspasio*; if the Vivacity of my Temper, and the seemingly uncouth Tenet, kindled me into a more humorous Gaiety, than became the Occasion. You speak of the Point, with so much Seriousness, and in such weighty Terms, as check my Levity, and command my Respect. Be pleased to execute, what You have promised; and the most engaged Attention of my Mind, shall atone for the petulant Sallies of my Tongue.

VOL. I.

* *Popilius Lænas*

† *Antiochus*, King of Syria.

Asp. To conceive a Dislike of any Doctrine, only because Persons of a particular Denomination, have been active and zealous to promote its Reception; this is hardly consistent with an impartial Enquiry after Truth.

Ther. I grant it, *Aspasio*. And I should be ashamed of my Opposition, if it was founded on so slight a Bottom. But, abstracted from all Party Considerations, I can see nothing in this supposed Article of our Faith, which may recommend it to the unprejudiced Enquirer.—What can be more awkward than the Term, or more irrational than the Sentiment?

Asp. The Word *imputed*, when used in this Connection, may possibly convey a disagreeable Sound to the Ears of some People. Because, they look upon it, as the peculiar Phraseology of a few *superstitious Sectarists*; and reject it, merely on the Foot of that unreasonable Surmise.—But, how can *You* be disgusted at the Expression, *Theron*; who have so often read it, in the most approved and judicious Writers? *St. Paul*, who might affirm with relation to his Epistles, much more truly than the Painter concerning his Pourtraits, *I write for Eternity* *; scruples not to use this awkward Language, several Times in the same Chapter †. *Milton*, the Cor-

rectness

* Alluding to the Painter, who, apologizing for the slow Procedure and scrupulously nice Touches of his Pencil, said; *Aeternitati pingo, I paint for Eternity*. And those Strokes had need be correct, which are intended, not barely to solicit, but to command the Admiration, of all succeeding Ages.

† See *Rom. iv.* In which single Chapter, some Branch of the Word *imputed*, to be imputed, occurs no less than ten or eleven Times.

rectness of whose Taste, and the Propriety of whose Style, no Person of Genius will ever question; delights to copy, in various Parts of his incomparable Poem, the Apostle's Diction.—Authorized by *such* Precedents, it is superior to Cavil, and warranted beyond all Exception.

As to the Sentiment, I take it to be the *very fundamental* Article of the Gospel: and I believe, whoever is acquainted with ecclesiastical Affairs, will allow, that it was the most mortal Arrow in the Heart of *Popery*, and the principal Pillar in the Establishment of the *Reformation*.—What says our LORD, with regard to the Love of GOD, and the Love of our Neighbour? *On these two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets*. Much the same would I venture to say, concerning the Imputation of our Sins to *CHRIST*, and the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness to Us: *On these two Doctrines, hang all the Privileges and the whole Glory of the Gospel*.

Ther. In our last Conversation, I must own, I saw a strong Resemblance between the Works and the Word of GOD. But I never observed any Thing in Nature, that bore the least *Analogy* to imputed Sin, or imputed Righteousness.—To me your two Doctrines seem strange, unaccountable, and irrational.

Asp. That our Sins should be charged upon the only begotten SON of GOD, and that his Righteousness should be imputed to sinful Worms, is strange, exceeding strange. The Psalmist calls it, *marvellous Loving-Kindness* *. The Apostle styles it, *Love that passeth Knowledge* †. And it has some-

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times,

* Psal. xvii. 7.

† Eph. iii. 19.

times, I must freely confess, been almost ready to stagger my Belief.—However, I have found myself relieved in this Perplexity, not only by the Testimonies of Scripture, but even from the Contemplation of Nature. Is not all Nature full of strange, unaccountable, and mysterious Effects?

Ther. That Nature is full of strange Effects, is undeniable. Strange are the Experiments of *Electricity*, and the occult Qualities of the *Load-stone*! Strange and surprising are those countless Legions of *Effluvia*, which transpire from a small odoriferous Body! More surprising still, are the infinite Myriads of *luminous* Particles, which issue from a smaller flaming Substance *.—There's not a Tree, or a Twig, or a Leaf, but surpasses the Comprehension of all Mankind. Even the minutest Atom, is big with Wonders.

Take a nearer Instance. This Cow, which comes grazing up to our very Feet. What is her Food? Grass; nothing but Grass, the wild Production of the Earth. Give the same Materials to the Confectioner, the Cook, or the most skilful Artist in the World. They, with all their Application and Industry, will never be able to work them up into a palatable Dish, or any serviceable Substance. Whereas this poor Animal, without so much as thinking on her Business, refines and concocts

* Dr. *Nieuventijt* has computed, That, from a lighted Candle, about the Size of six to the Pound, there issues, in the Second of a Minute, an Effusion of Particles, vastly more than ten hundred thousand million Times the Number of Sands; which the whole Globe of the Earth contains.—To call this a *very great* Multitude, would be saying little. It nonplusses our *Thoughts*, and exceeds the utmost Stretch of *Imagination*!

concocts them, in the most perfect Manner. The Juices of so contemptible an Herb, *compounded and secreted* in her Body; harden into Bone, and soften into Flesh: grow tough, as a Cord, in the Sinews; and become tender, as a Jelly, in the Fat. They ooze through the Udder, and form a delicious Stream or Milk; they flow along the Veins, in reeking Tides of Blood. Here, they take a crimson Stain; there, they equal the Lily in Whiteness; on the Skin and in the Hair, they transform themselves into every Variety of Colours.

Asp. Pray, can you account for *all* these extraordinary Transmutations? Or, not to task your Philosophy too heavily, can you tell Us, how one — only *one* of them is wrought? How the coarse and bitter Herbage, chewed and concocted by this dumb Creature, is converted into so rich a Dainty as Cream?

Ther. As well may our Sight penetrate the Center of the Globe, as Philosophy explain this, and many other such Secrets. The Operations of Nature, are nice and delicate, beyond all Parallel, and beyond all Conception. Insomuch, that the *intelligent* Observer, can no where cast his Eye, or fix his Thoughts, without being astonished, transported, and even lost in Admiration.

Asp. Are not then the Operations of Nature, so many Vouchers for the mysterious Truths of Christianity? Since the Procedure of Providence in this visible System, is a continued Series of stupendous and unsearchable Operations; need We be alarmed, can We reasonably be offended, if the Scheme of Redemption is equally stupendous, is far more amazing? Yet, though *amazing*, I hope it will

not appear, what You was pleased to insinuate, irrational.

Suppose, We state the Signification of the *Terms*; and adjust the Boundaries of our Subject, before We enter upon a Survey of its Contents?

Ther. Such a Caution would have prevented, at least have shortened, many a vehement and tedious Controversy.—You see, on yonder Heath, the Preparations for an approaching Race. There stand the *Posts*, which are to mark out the Limits of the Course. Without this previous restrictive Care, how irregular would be the Excursions of the contending Steeds! How *difficult*, rather how *impossible*, to declare the Conqueror, and award the Prize!—A clear Definition of Terms, seems equally necessary for candid Disputants. Without it, they may wrangle for Ages, yet never come to a Determination.

Asp. We were lately considering the transcendent Excellency of the Scriptures. Here We have a most striking and capital Exemplification of the Subject.—The Light of Nature might teach Us somewhat, relating to the Justification of Man in a State of Innocence. But it knows nothing of the Method, whereby *fallen* and guilty Man, may be justified in the Sight of GOD. This is a Secret, hid from all the Researches of Reason, and from all the Sages of Antiquity. To the Prophets and Apostles alone, We owe the Discovery of this Mine—this rich and inexhaustible Mine, of holy Consolation and heavenly Treasure.

Ther. I wait for a Specimen of your Treasure, or a Definition of your favourite Point.

Asp.

Asp. *Justification* is an Act of GOD Almighty's Grace; whereby He acquits Sinners from their Guilt; and accounts them righteous*; for the Sake of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness, wrought out for them, and imputed to them.

Ther. Two of your Terms want some farther Explanation. What do You understand by *CHRIST*'s Righteousness, and what is the Meaning of *imputed*?

Asp. By *CHRIST*'s Righteousness I understand, the Whole of his *active* and *passive* Obedience; springing from the perfect Holiness of his Heart; continued through every Stage of his Life; and extending to the very last Pang of his Death.—By the Word *imputed* I would signify, That this Righteousness, though performed by our LORD, is placed to our Account; is reckoned or adjudged by GOD as *our own*. Insomuch, that We may plead it, and rely on it, for the Pardon of our Sins; for the Communication of Grace; and for the Enjoyment of Life eternal.—Shall I illustrate my Meaning by a well attested Fact?

Ther. Nothing gives Us so easy a Conception of any difficult Point, as this Method of explaining, by *parallel* Facts, or proper Similitudes.

Asp. I don't say the Case is parallel. I only produce it, to aid our Conceptions.—*Onesimus*, You know, was *Philemon*'s Slave†. He had perfidiously deserted his Master's Service, and still more perfidiously stole his Goods. The Fugitive, in his guilty

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Rambles,

* Should any Reader object to the Definition; apprehending, that Justification implies no more, than the Pardon of Sins; I would desire Him to suspend his Judgment, till He has perused *Dialogue X.* where this Point is more circumstantially considered.

† See the Epistle to *Philemon*.

Rambles, providentially meets with St. Paul. He is charmed and captivated with that gracious Gospel, which proclaims Mercy even for the vilest of Sinners. He becomes a sincere Convert to the Religion of JESUS, and is received into the spiritual Patronage of the Apostle. Who, being informed of his dishonest Conduct, and obnoxious State, undertakes to bring about a Reconciliation, with his offended Master: dispatches Him, for this Purpose, with a Letter to *Philemon*: and, amongst other Persuatives, writes thus in the poor Criminal's Behalf; *If He hath wranged Thee, or oweth Thee ought, put that on mine Account. I Paul have written it with mine own Hand; I will repay it.*

That, which the zealous Preacher of Christianity offered, the adored AUTHOR of Christianity executed.—We had revolted from the LORD of all Lords, and broke his holy Commandments. The SON of GOD, infinitely compassionate, vouchsafes to become our Mediator. That nothing might be wanting, to render his Mediation successful, He places Himself in our Stead. The Punishment, which *We* deserved, *He* endures. The Obedience, which *We* owed, *He* fulfils.—Both which, being imputed to Us, and accepted for Us, are the Foundation of our Pardon, are the procuring Cause of our Justification.

Ther. Is this the exact Signification of the original Word, which We translate *imputed*?

Ans. In the Book of *Numbers*, We meet with this Phrase; and in such a Connection, as clears up its Meaning.—JEHOVAH enacts a Decree concerning the *Levites*; who had no Vintages to gather, nor any Harvests to reap; only the Tythes

of

of both, to receive. The tenth Part of these their Tythes, He directs them to present, in the Form of a Heave-offering: adding, *And this your Heave-offering shall be reckoned * unto You, as though it were the Corn of the Threshing-floor, and as the Fulness of the Wine-press: as satisfactory to me, and as beneficial to You, as if it was the Tenth of your own Labours, and the Tythe of your own Increase.*—So, the expiatory Sufferings, which **CHRIST** endured; the complete Obedience, which He performed; are *reckoned to* true Believers. *As though* the former were sustained in their own Persons, and the latter fulfilled in their own Lives. Are altogether *as effectual*, for obtaining their Salvation, as if they were their own personal Qualifications.

Ther.

* Numb. xviii. 27. נחשב exactly answers to St. Paul's *λογισθη*, Rom. iv. 9.—The same Phrase is used, and the same Doctrine taught, Lev. xvii. 3, 4. *What Man soever there be of the House of Israel that killeth an Ox, or Lamb, or Goat in the Camp, by way of Sacrifice, or for the Purpose of Atonement; and bringeth it not unto the Door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, to offer unto the LORD an Offering before the Tabernacle, the grand Type of the Body of CHRIST; Blood shall be imputed to that Man; He hath shed Blood; and that Man shall be cut off from among his People.*—Here was no Murder committed by the Offender, yet the Crime of Murder is charged; or, as the Scripture speaks, *Blood is imputed to Him.* Lest Any should mistake the Meaning of this Expression, or not understand it in its due Latitude, the Divine LAW-GIVER is his own Interpreter; *He hath in the Eye of my Justice shed Blood: He shall pass for a Murderer, and be punished as a Murderer; He shall be cut off from among his People.*—Thus also saith the eternal JUDGE concerning the Believers in **CHRIST**; “The Righteousness of my SON is imputed to them; they are in the Eye of my Justice righteous: they shall be dealt with, as righteous Persons;” “made Partakers of the Kingdom of Heaven.”

Ther. The Imputation mentioned in your Passage, is the Imputation of something done by the *Levites* themselves, not of something done by *Another*. This, I apprehend, is the true Import of the Word, when it occurs affirmatively in Scripture.

Asp. This is *always* the Import—should have been said, in order to make the Objection forcible. But You could not so soon forget the Instance, just now alledged.

St. Paul, speaking of the Crimes, which *Onesimus* had committed; and of the Injuries, which *Philemon* had sustained; says, “Charge them all on me. The Original is, *impute* * them all to me. “The Meaning is, I will be responsible for all. “As much, as if the whole Guilt had been of my “own contracting †.”—Here is supposed, not the Imputation of something done by the Apostle *Himself*, but of *Another’s* criminal Behaviour.

What is written in the Law, and what is written in the Gospel? In both these Places, How readest Thou?—In the Gospel, I read; That *Righteousness is imputed without Works* †. This utterly excludes every Thing performed, or acquired, by the Party Himself.—Besides; We are assured, that

GOD

* *Εποι ελλοβη*, the very Words used by the Apostle, when stating the Method of our Justification.

† Thus We may suppose our LORD speaking; “These poor Sinners have wronged Thee, O FA-
“THER, by their Unrighteousness and Ungodliness.
“They owe Thee an inconceivably vast Sum. A Debt
“of consummate Obedience, and complete Satisfaction.
“Put it all on my Account. I JESUS have written it
“with my own Hand: I will repay it. Now I give my
“Bond; and, in the Fulness of Time, Lo! I come, to
“fulfil my Engagement.”

† Rom. iv. 6.

GOD justifies the Ungodly * ; those, who have nothing of their own, but abominable Iniquities. To those, therefore, something else must necessarily be imputed, besides their own personal Deeds.

Under the Law, Aaron is commanded to put the Iniquities of Israel upon the Scape-Goat †.—The same Sentiment is reindulged, when the Goat is said to bear the Iniquities of the People ‡. This was plainly an Imputation ; yet, could not possibly be the Imputation of any Thing done by the devoted Animal §.—The Effects which took place upon the Execution of this Ordinance, indicate a Translocation of Guilt. For, the Congregation was cleansed, but the Goat polluted. The Congregation so cleansed, that their Iniquities were conveyed away, and to be found no more. The Goat so polluted, that it communicated Defilement to the Man, who conducted it into “ the Land not inhabited.”—All this was GOD’s own Appointment ; and designed, like the whole System of Mosaic Ceremonies,

* Rom. iv. 5.
xvi. 22.

† Lev. xv. 21.

‡ Lev.

§ The Words of the sacred Ordinance are very emphatical. Aaron shall lay both his Hands upon the Head of the live Goat, and confess over Him all the Iniquities of the Children of Israel, and all their Transgressions in all their Sins, putting them upon the Head of the Goat, and shall send Him away by the Hand of a fit Man into the Wilderness. And the Goat shall bear upon Him all their Iniquities, unto a Land not inhabited.—Whatever Sense the Men of Learning and Refinement may force upon these Words, Aaron shall put all their Transgressions upon the Head of the Goat ; The Goat shall bear upon Him all their Iniquities ; I think the common People of Israel could find no other Meaning in them, than such as denoted a transferring of Guilt, from the Congregation to their Victim. And this is Imputation.

nies, to instruct his Church in the Knowledge of the great MEDIATOR. In the Knowledge of that wonderful Method, whereby we have Redemption from our Sins, and Righteousness unto Life.

Ther. If this is your Meaning, *Aspasio*; I am apt to think, it will be a difficult Matter to make me a Profelyte. I must be content to pass for one of the stiff-necked Generation. Since, I can see neither Wisdom nor Equity, in ascribing to a Person, what He has not; or imputing to Him, what He does not.

Asp. It was not *Aspasio*, but his Friend, who set out with a View of making Profelytes. If I can maintain my Ground, and vindicate my own Belief, it will be no inconsiderable Acquisition.—However, I shall not despair of seeing the Partner of my Heart, become a Sharer of my Faith. When We are convinced of our *numberless* Sins; when We feel the *Depravity* of our Nature; and begin to discern the *inconceivable* Sanctity of our JUDGE; THEN, perhaps, this exploded Article may be found worthy of Acceptance—its Constitution admired, as the Wisdom of GOD—and its Privilege coveted, as the Consolation of our Souls.

Ther. I shall wave at present, an Examination of each Particular; and only make some *remote* Observations. Which seem, nevertheless, pretty nearly to affect your Scheme.—Some Persons, I dare be positive, have not so much as heard of your Terms; many and more have not the least Acquaintance with your Doctrine. Will you strike off all these from

from the List of Christians? Will you condemn all these as desperate Infidels?

Asp. Not heard of them!—In a Protestant Nation!—Where the Gospel is publicly preached, and the Bible in every One's Hand!—This, if true, is much to be lamented.

In Answer to your Question—It is not my Custom, much less is it my Prerogative, to *condemn* Others. Has GOD committed all Judgment unto me? That I should presume to anticipate the decisive Sentence, or launch the Thunderbolts of eternal Vengeance?—Neither do I affirm the Condition of such Persons to be desperate. There may be Those, who have no *explicit* Knowledge of the Doctrine; who are even *prejudiced* against the Expressions; yet live under the Belief of the Truth, and in the Exercise of the Duty.—“ They are never
“ diverted, by the Splendor of any Thing that is
“ great, or by the Conceit of any Thing that is
“ good in them, from looking upon themselves as
“ *sinful* Dust and Ashes.” Their whole Dependence is upon that *JUST ONE*, who expired on the Cross, and whom the Heavens have received. They seek the sanctifying SPIRIT, in consequence of their SAVIOUR's Death; and give all Diligence, to *add to their Faith Virtue* *.

Ther. If People may be safe, and their eternal Interests secure, without any Knowledge of these Particularities; why should you offer to puzzle their Heads, about a few unnecessary *Scholastic* Terms?

Asp. Scriptural Terms, You should have said, *Theron*.—However, We are not very solicitous, as
to

to the Credit, or the Use, of any particular Set of Phrases. Only let Men be humbled, as *convicted Criminals*, at the REDEEMER's Feet: let them rely, as *devoted Pensioners*, on his precious Merits: and they are undoubtedly in the Way to a blissful Immortality.—Yet, will their Way be less clear, their Steps more embarrassed, by not distinctly understanding the benign and consolatory Doctrine, of *free Justification through the Righteousness of JESUS CHRIST*. A proper Information, as to this important Point, would shed Light upon their Paths, and encourage them in their Journey; would further their Progress in Holiness, and increase their Joy in the LORD.

Ther. The Followers of your Opinion, I have observed, are perpetually dwelling upon this *one favourite* Topic; to the Exclusion of that grand and truly essential Part of Christianity, Sanctification.

Assp. If you have ever taken notice of such a Conduct, You are unquestionably right, in withholding your Approbation. It is a manifest Incongruity, and deserves your Censure. But, assure Yourself, it proceeds from a Misapprehension in the Persons, and has no Connection with the Nature of the Doctrine.

I am far, very far from reducing the *various* Parts of Christianity, (which, when connected, make up so well-proportioned a System) to this *single*, however distinguished Branch. Sanctification is equally necessary, both to our present Peace, and to our final Felicity *. Indeed, they are as reciprocally necessary,

* Not to *obtain* our Peace and Felicity. This is done solely and completely by *JESUS CHRIST*. But as a necessary and eminent *Ingredient* in both.

necessary, for the Purposes of intellectual and eternal Happiness; as the *Heart* and the *Lungs* are, to the Subsistence of the animal Oeconomy. The former must transmit, the latter must refine, the vital Fluid; or else, Disease will take place, and Death will ensue.—My Intention is, that those fundamental Truths of the Gospel, like these Master-Organs in the Body, may have each its proper Office assigned; each concur to support the better Health, and to promote the spiritual Growth of the Christian.

Ther. Other of your zealous Folks I have known, who are all for the *sanctifying* Influence of the SPIRIT; and reckon this Affiance on the SAVIOUR's Merits, among the beggarly Elements of Religion. They scarce ever mention what *CHRIST* has done *for Us*; but insist wholly upon, What He does *in Us*.—When the religious People are so divided among themselves *, how can a Stranger act? Which Opinion shall He prefer?

Asp. Let Him not prefer, but associate. Discard neither, but choose both.—If the All-gracious REDEEMER has poured out his Blood on the Cross, that my Guilt may be expiated; and presents

* *Theron's* Enquiry concerning these *two* Particulars, is sometimes made an Objection against *all* Religion.—Have the Gentlemen, who adopt this Objection, never seen the Naturalists divided in their Judgment; with relation to the Design and Use of several Appearances in the material, the vegetable, the animal Creation? While One decries as a *Nuisance*, what another admires as a *Beauty*.—Yet no One, I believe, ever took it into his Head, from such a Diversity of Opinions, to *doubt* whether the Frame of Nature is a just, a regular, and a finished System: or to *deny*, That Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, support, direct, and pervade the Whole.

sents his Intercession in Heaven, that I may be endowed with the SPIRIT:—If He will be the *meritorious Cause* of my Justification, and the *operative Principle* of my Sanctification:—Why should I scruple to receive Him, in either, in both Capacities? Who would lop off the Right-hand, in order to impart the higher Dignity, or the greater Importance to the Left? I would be no Partialist in Christianity: neither diminish her Dowry, nor mutilate her Privileges.

Ther. You seem, if not to mutilate, yet to *split* the Merits of CHRIST, and parcel out the Efficacy of his mediatorial Undertaking. Ascribing so much to his active, and so much to his passive Righteousness; Pardon to *this*, and Life to *that*.

Assp. Some, perhaps, may be pleased with this Way of stating the Matter. But, it is a Method, which I neither attempt to defend, nor wish to imitate.—To *distinguish* between the active and passive Righteousness, I think, is not amiss. Because, this sets the Fulness of our LORD's Merit in the clearest Light; and gives the completest Honour to GOD's holy Law.—But to *divide* them into detached Portions, independent on each other, seems to be fanciful, rather than judicious. For, had either Part of the mediatorial Obedience been wanting; I apprehend, neither Pardon, nor Acceptance, nor any spiritual Blessing, could have been vouchsafed to fallen Man.

The two *Parts* are inseparable; making, in their Connection, a necessary and noble *Whole*, for the Accomplishment of our Salvation. Just as the Light and the Heat of yonder Sun, unite their Operation; to produce this delightful Day, and this

this fruitful Weather.—However, therefore, I may happen to express myself, I never consider the active or the passive Righteousness, in the *exclusive* Sense; but would always have them understood, as a grand and glorious Aggregate. Looking upon our SAVIOUR's universal Obedience, which commenced at his Incarnation; was carried on through his Life; and terminated in his Death;—looking upon all this, in its *collective* Form, as the Object of my Faith, and the Foundation of my Hopes*.

Ther. I think, You lay too much Stress upon this controverted, and perhaps *merely speculative* Point.

Asp. Merely speculative! Say not thus, my dear Friend.—“How I may be justified before GOD, “my Maker, my Governor, and my Judge?” Is, of all Enquiries, the most *interesting and important*. It is the main Hinge, on which every Instance of practical Religion turns †. True Comfort, willing

* In this Opinion, *Aspasio* has *Milton's* Archangel for his Precedent. *Michael* speaking of his LORD and our LORD, says;

The Law of GOD exact he shall fulfil,

Both by Obedience and by Love, though Love

Alone fulfil the Law; thy Punishment

He shall endure, by coming in the Flesh

To a reproachful Life and cursed Death;

Proclaiming Life to all who shall believe

In his Redemption.

B. XII. 402.

According to the Tenour of these very valuable Lines, our LORD's fulfilling the Law, and enduring the Punishment, are the *concurring* Causes, or the one *compound* Cause, of Life and Redemption to Sinners.

† *Diffundit se*, says the judicious *Walsley*, *Justificationis, Doctrina per totum Theologicæ Corpus; & præsent Fundamenta*
Vol. I. F bic,

Obedience, holy Communion with the Divine MAJESTY, all depend upon this capital Point.

Far from being a merely speculative Point, it ascribes the most undivided Glory to the ever-blessed GOD, and his free Grace.—It administers the most serene and *substantial* Satisfactions to frail, but believing Man.—It cherishes, with the most kindly Influence, that pure and undefiled Religion, which has its Seat in the Heart; has its Birth from Love; and is a real Antepast, both of the Business and the Bliss of Saints in Light.

In short; Justification through the Righteousness of JESUS CHRIST, is an Article of Religion, whose Benefits are (to use a charming Simile suggested by this rural Prospect) numerous *as the Bud of the Field* *.—Can We, then, lay too much Stress upon a Doctrine, so greatly momentous; upon a Privilege, so extensively beneficial?

Ther. When all this is proved, then for my Reply, *Aspasio*. Nay, then You shall have more than a Reply; I promise You my cordial Assent.

Asp. And if all this be incapable of Proof, I assure You, *Theron*, I will not solicit your Assent. Nay more, I will revoke and renounce my own.

Ther. At present, I believe, We must go in, and prepare for our Visitants. Some other Interview may

hic, vel bene, vel male, jacta sunt, eo universum Aedificium vel solidius augustiusque ascendit, vel male statuminatum scadam minuitur Ruinam. De Econ.

The Article of free Justification, says the zealous

Luther, is the chiefest Article of all Christian Doctrine. "The Majesty and Utility whereof, whoso rightly esteemeth, to Him all other Things shall seem but vile, and nothing worth." *Comment. on Galat.*

monitus

* *Ezek. xvi. 7.*

may afford Us Leisure, to canvass this Question more minutely.

Asp. Though I have never much Inclination, even when there is the most Leisure, for Controversy; yet, if You insist upon it, I shall not absolutely refuse to engage in a Debate with my *Theron*. Because, He will come to the amicable Rencounter, without bringing *angry Passions* for his Second.—My Reasons will be impartially weighed, not artfully eluded, much less answered with Inveective.—If some inadvertent Expression should drop from my Lips, He will not rigorously prosecute the Slip; nor aggravate an unguarded Sentence into the Crime of Heresy.—Candour will form his Judgment, and Good-nature dictate his Expressions.

Thet. I thank You, my dear *Aspasio*, for your genteel Admonition. What *I am*, in the Language of Complaisance, means, What *I should be*.—Well: I will endeavour to take your Hint, and check this my Impetuosity of Spirit. I have admired, O! that I could imitate, the beautiful Example of *St. Paul*. When *Festus*, forgetting the Dignity of the Governor, and the Politeness of the Gentleman, uttered that indecent Reflection; *Paul, thou art beside thyself: much Learning doth make Thee mad*. Did the great Preacher of Christianity kindle into Resentment?—The Charge was unjust and abusive. But the Apostle, with a perfect Command of Himself, returned the softest, yet the most spirited Answer imaginable. *I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak the Words of Truth and Soberness* *.—Inexpressibly

* See *Acts* xxvi. Where We have an Apology, the most delicate and masterly, perhaps, that ever was made;

preffibly graceful was this calm and obliging Reply. Though short, infinitely more convincing than a whole Torrent of bitter or recriminating Words. It disarmed the Judge of his rising Displeasure; it conciliated the Favour of his royal Assessor; and brought Honour to the Christian Cause.

This amiable Self-Regimen, and Moderation of Temper, I shall be sure to see exemplified in my Friend's Conversation; however I may fail of it myself, or be Proof against all his Arguments.

Ass. Ah! *Theron*, We want no Monitor, to remind Us of our supposed Excellencies. And if You begin with your Compliments, it is Time to put an end to our Discourse.

Only let me just observe, That *divine Truths* cannot be properly discerned, but by the enlightening Influences of the *Divine SPIRIT*. We must address Ourselves to this Enquiry, not only with unprejudiced Minds, but likewise with praying Hearts. We must bring to this Dispute, not barely the Quiver of Logic, but that *Unction from the HOLY ONE*,

eminent for *fine Address, clear Reasoning, and important Truth*. Which, notwithstanding all these very superior Recommendations, is deemed *Madness*: and that, by a Nobleman from *Rome*; the Seat of Science, and Fountain-head of polite Literature.—An Evidence this, no less demonstrative than deplorable, of the Apostle's Assertion; *The natural Man, however ingenious or accomplished, receiveth not the Things of the SPIRIT of GOD. Nay, they are Foolishness unto Him.* The *Roman* Virtue, and the *Athenian* Philosophy; the self-admiring Pharisee, and the free-thinking Sadducee; all concur to pour Contempt upon that Person and that Righteousness, which are the one adequate Object of the divine Delight. Therefore our *LORD* most justly declared; *Blessed is He, whoſeever ſhall not be offended in me.*

DIALOGUE II. 69

ONE, which may teach Us all Things *.—Let Us
then adopt the Poet's Aspiration;

*Thou celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the Mind through all her Powers
Irradiate; there plant Eyes; all Mist from thence
Purge and disperse!*

MILTON, B. III. 51.

* 1 John. ii. 20, 27.



F 3

D I A



DIALOGUE III.

THERON.

WE are now, *Aspasio*, about two Miles distant from my House. The Horse-Road lies through a narrow dusty Lane. The Foot-Path leads along a spacious pleasant *Meadow*. Suppose, We deliver our Horses to the Servant, and walk the Remainder of the Way?

Asp. You could not make a Proposal, more agreeable to my Inclination. Especially, as the Air is become cool, and the Walk is so inviting.

What a magnificent and charming Scene?—Hills, on either Side, gently rising, and widely spreading. Their Summits, crowned with scattered Villages, and clustering Trees. Their Slopes, divided into a beauteous Chequer-work; consisting partly of Tillage, with its waving Crops; partly of Pasturage, with its grazing Herds.—Before Us, the Trefoil, the Clover, and a Variety of grassy Plants, differently bladed, and differently branched, weave themselves into a *Carpet* of living Green. Can any of the Manufactures formed in the Looms, or extended in the Palaces of *Persia*, vie with the Cover-

ing

DIALOGUE III.

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ing of this ample Area? Vie with it, in Grandeur of Size, or Delicacy of Decoration?

What a Profusion of the gayest Flowers, fringing the Banks, and embroidering the Plain!—Nothing can be brighter, than the Lustre of those silver *Daisies*; nothing deeper, than the Tinge of those golden *Crowfoots*. Yet, both seem to acquire additional Liveliness, by succeeding to the Deformity of Winter, and by flourishing amidst the freshest Verdure.

Ther. Nature is truly in *her Prime*.—The vegetable Tribes are putting on their richest Attire. Those Chesnuts, on our Right-hand, begin to rear their flowering Pyramids; those Willows, on our left, are tipt with Tassels of Grey; while yonder Poplars, which overlook the River, and seem to command the Meadows, are pointed with Rolls of Silver.

The Hawthorn, in every *Hedge*, is partly turgid with silken Gems, partly diffused into a milk-white Bloom. Not a straggling Furze, nor a solitary Thicket on the *Heath*, but wears a rural Noddy. Even amidst that neglected *Dike*, the *Arum** rises in humble State; most curiously shrouded in her leafy Tabernacle, and surrounded with luxuriant Families, each distinguished by a peculiar Livery.

F 4

* *Arum*—a wild Herb, which unfolds but one Leaf; formed after a very singular Pattern; bearing some Resemblance to the Hare's Ear. It is really one of the prettiest Fancies in Nature's Wardrobe. So much admired by the Country People, that they have dignified it with the Appellation of *Lords and Ladies*. Because it looks, I suppose, somewhat like a Person of Quality, sitting, with an Air of Ease and Dignity, in his open Sedan.

of Green. Look wherever We will, all is a delightful Display of present Fertility, and a joyous Pledge of future Plenty.—Now we experience what the royal Poet, in very delicate Imagery, describes: *The Winter is past; the Rain is over and gone. The Flowers appear on the Earth; the Time of the Singing of Birds is come; and the Voice of the Turtle is heard in our Land. The Fig-Tree putteth forth her green Figs; and the Vine with the tender Grapes give a good Smell* *.

Asp. Your Quotation and the Scene remind me of a Remark, which should have taken place in our last Night's Discourse. When we were enumerating the Excellencies of the sacred Writings, methinks, we might have added;—Are you fond of *Pastoral*, in all its flowery Graces, and blooming Honours? Never have ye seen such exquisite Touches of rural Painting, or such sweet Images of endeared Affection, as in the *Song of Songs* which is *Solomon's*. All the brilliant and amiable Appearances in Nature are employed, to delineate the Tenderness of *his* Heart, who is Love itself—to portray the Beauty of *his* Person, who is *The chiefest among ten thousand*—and describe the Happiness of *these* Souls, whose Fellowship is with the *FATHER*, and with *his* Son *JESUS CHRIST* †.

See! *Theron*, what the chearing Warmth, and the genial Showers, of Spring have done! The rough Tree softens into Verdure. The ragged Thorn is robed with Beauty. Even the uncultivated Lanes teem with Herbage. *Such a Change*, so pleasing and so ennobling, the Gospel of *CHRIST* introduces into the Soul.—Not a Day, *scarce*

* Cant. ii. 11, 12, 13.

† 1 John i. 3.

scarce an Hour passes, but this Season of universal Fecundity produces something *new*; something that improves the Aspect, and increases the Riches of Nature. And is there any State or any Circumstance of Life, in which the Faith of *CHRIST* does not exert a similar Efficacy? Does not purify the Heart, and bring forth Fruit unto *GOD*?

This is supposed to be the spiritual Meaning of that fine descriptive Picture *, which You have borrowed

* A fine Picture indeed! Most judiciously planned; most strongly contrasted; and executed in the most masterly Manner. As it is produced to View, I will beg Leave to point out some of the highly-finished Strokes.

The Winter is past, with all its howling Winds, and piercing Frosts.—*The Rains are over*, which deluged the Meadows; and the Clouds are *gone*, which darkened the Skies.—All is Serenity and Splendour above. While all is Gaiety and Beauty below.

Flowers, of every graceful Form, and every glossy Stain, *appear on the Earth*. Enamelling the Hills and Plains; embroidering the Robe of Spring; and diffusing Smiles over all the Face of Nature.

The Time of Singing of Birds is come. The Woodland Choirs awake. Every green Bough, and every blooming Spray, resounds with Harmony. From all Quarters, the Ear is charmed with artless Strains; which are, at once, the Perfection of Music, and the very Language of Joy.

The Vine, with the tender Grapes, give a good Smell. In the Vineyard, the filken Gems burst, and the infant Clusters appear. They breathe Balm on the gentle Gales, and perfume the soft delicious Air. In every Garden and every Grove, the flowery Caskets are unlocked. They diffuse far and near those exquisite Odours, which regale the Smell, and “rejoice the Heart.”

The Fig-Tree putteth forth her green Figs; forms the embryo Fruit; and excites the agreeable Idea of approaching Plenty. Adding to all the Entertainments of the

borrowed from the *Canticles*. It displays the *benign Agency* of Grace and its Doctrines; especially, of our LORD's Satisfaction for Sin, and of his Righteousness imputed to Sinners. The Blessings operate, with much the same favourable and happy Energy, both on our Morals and our Comforts; as the *sweet Influences* of the vernal Sun operate, on the sprouting Herbs, and opening Flowers.

Ther. If such were the Effects of your Doctrine, it would stand the fairer Chance for general Acceptation.—But there are several weighty Scruples to be removed, before Persons of a liberal and enlarged Way of Thinking, can acquiesce in your Opinion. Who, for Instance, can persuade Himself, that what You call *The Satisfaction of CHRIST*, is consistent with the Dictates of Reason, or with the Perfections of the DEITY?

Ass. Let Gentlemen be candid in their Enquiries, and truly liberal in their Way of Thinking; then, I flatter myself, these Scruples may be removed, without much Difficulty.

GOD, the Almighty Creator, and supreme Governor of the World, having made Man, gave Him a Law; with a *Penalty* annexed, in case of Disobedience.—This sacred Law our Fore-father Adam presumptuously broke; and We, his Posterity, were involved in his Guilt. Or, should that Point be considered, the Eye and the Ear, the more pleasing, because the more important, Supports of Life and Health.

Here then the most distinguishing and delicate Circumstances are selected. Whatever most eminently and most amiably characterises the Season. All is heightened, by a Retrospect on Winter and its Horrors, from which we are delivered. All is endeared, by a Prospect of autumnal Delights, for which Preparation is making.

controverted, We have undeniably made, by many personal Transgressions, his Apostacy *our own*.—Inasmuch, that all have sinned; have forfeited their Happiness, and are become obnoxious to Punishment.

Man being thus ruined, none could recover Him, except his injured MAKER. But shall He be recovered, shall He be restored, without suffering the Punishment, *due* to his Crime, and *threatened* by his CREATOR?—What then will become of the *Justice* of the Divine LAWGIVER? And how shall the *Honour* of his Holy Law be maintained? At this rate, who would reverence its Authority, or fear to violate its Precepts?—Sinners might be emboldened to multiply their Transgressions; and tempted to think, that the GOD of immaculate Holiness, the GOD of unchangeable Veracity, is *altogether such an One as themselves*.*.

Does it not appear needful, that *some* Expedient be devised, in order to prevent these dishonourable and horrid Consequences?

Then. Proceed to inform Us, what the Expedient is.

Ans. To ascertain the Dignity of the supreme Administration, yet rescue Mankind from utter Destruction, this admirable Purpose was formed, and in the Fulness of Time executed. The second Person of the ever-blessed TRINITY unites the human Nature to the Divine; *submits* Himself to

*. This was actually the Case, as We are informed by the SEARCHER of Hearts, when, on a particular Occasion, Punishment was only *retarded*. How much more would such impious Opinions have prevailed, if, on this grand Act of Disobedience, Punishment had been intirely *forborne*? Psal. l. 21.

the Obligations of his People; and becomes *responsible* for all their Guilt. In this Capacity, He performs a perfect Obedience, and undergoes the Sentence of Death: makes a full Expiation of their Sins, and establishes their Title to Life.—By which Means, the Law is satisfied; Justice is magnified; and the richest Grace exercised. Man enjoys a great Salvation, not to the Discredit of *any*, but to the unspeakable Glory of *all*, the divine Attributes.

This is what We mean by *CHRIST's* Satisfaction. And this, I should imagine, wants no Recommendation to our *unprejudiced Reason*; as, I am sure, it is most delightfully accommodated to our *distressed Condition*.—It is also confirmed by many express Passages of Scripture, and illustrated by a Variety of very significant Images.

Ther. Pray, let me be favoured with some of your scriptural Images.—After which, We may enquire, whether your Doctrine will stand the Test of Reason.

Asp. What is your Notion of a *Ransom*?

Ther. To ransom, is to redeem any One from Captivity or Misery, by Purchase, by Exchange, or some other valuable Consideration.

Asp. When *Priam* ransomed the dead Body of *Hector* from the victorious *Achilles*, how was it done?

Ther. By paying a *Price**.—Thus *Fabius* recovered the Captives, which were taken by *Hannibal*. He transmitted the Sum required, and they were discharged from their Confinement.

Asp. *an infinitely rich Price.* *Hyperbolical* this, as applied by *Homer*: *strictly true*, when referred to *CHRIST*.

App. Such is the Redemption procured for Sinners by our **LORD JESUS CHRIST**. Of such a Nature, (though incomparably more grand and august in all its Circumstances) and expressed by the very same Word *, *The Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister; and to give his Life a Ransom for Many.*

CHRIST also paid a Price — a real Price — a most satisfactory Price. In Consideration of which, our Freedom from Death, from Hell, from every penal Evil is granted. *Ye are redeemed †, says the Apostle, not with corruptible Things, Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of CHRIST.*—Let me add one Text more; which, in the same Style of commutative Justice, asserts the same Truth. **CHRIST** has redeemed Us ‡, not by way of Entreaty,

* *Λύτρον ἀπολύτρωσις*, are used in this precise Signification, by the most approved Authors of Greece.—*Ἀντιπαύει τὰ λύτρα τῷ Ἀντίκῃ, καὶ τὰς αἰχμαλωτίας ἀπελευθεῖ*, says *Plutarch*. *Ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἦλθε δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν ἀντὶ λύτρων πολλῶν*, says our blessed SAVIOUR, *Matt. xx. 28.*—*Ἀπολύτρωσε τὰ δαίμονια ἐν ἡμῖν*, is the Language of *Demosthenes*. *Εν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν διὰ τὸ ἁμαρτῶν ἡμῶν*, are the Words of *St. Paul*, *Eph. i. 7.*—To establish this important Point, and to familiarise the comfortable Idea to our Minds, the sacred Writers abound in this Phraseology. See *Luke i. 68. ii. 38. xxiv. 21.*—*Rom. iii. 24.*—*Tit. ii. 14.*—*Heb. ix. 12.*

† *1 Pet. i. 18.* We have an equivalent Expression, used in the same Signification, by one of the correctest Writers in the World;

Et Fratrem Pollux alterna Morte redemit. VIRG.

‡ *Gal. iii. 13.* *Ἐξέσχετον*—We are said to be bought, *1 Cor. vi. 20.* Not in a metaphorical Sense, but really and properly. For, here the Price is mentioned in general; by *St. Peter* the Price is particularly specified, *1 Pet. i. 18, 19.*

treaty, but by paying a Redemption-Price. He hath bought, not begged Us off, from the Curse of the Law.—Yes, my Friend,

*The Ransom was paid down. The Fund of Heav'n,
Heav'n's inexhaustible exhausted Fund,*

Amazing and amaz'd, pour'd forth the Price,

All Price beyond. Though curious to compute,

*Archangels fail'd to cast the mighty Sum *.*

Ther. Hold a little, good *Aspasio*. Consider the Consequence of what You maintain. If there was a Ransom in the Case, to *Whom* was it paid?—The Devil had led Sinners captive. They are said to be the Slaves of Satan. And shall the blessed *JESUS* pay his Life to that accursed Fiend? Shocking to imagine!—Yet, shocking as it is, it must follow from your own, and your Poet's Assertion.

Asp. You misapprehend the Case, *Theron*. The Ransom was paid to *GOD*. *Thou hast redeemed Us to GOD †*, is the Confession of the Saints in Light.—He is the great *Law-giver*, against whom our Sins are committed †. He is the great *Householder*, to whom the Debt is due ‖. Satisfaction, therefore, was made to the divine *Law*, and to the divine *Justice*. The one of which was offended; the other violated; and both concurred to denounce the Transgressor's Doom.—Of which Doom *Satan* was only the destined Executioner. Whose *Malignity*, and implacable *Rage*, *GOD* is pleased to make the Instrument of inflicting his Vengeance.

As
Night-Thoughts, No IV. † Rev. v. 9.

† Psal. li. 5.

‖ Matt. xviii. 23, 24.

DIALOGUE III. 79

As He formerly used the idolatrous Kings of *Assyria* and *Babylon*, to chastise the disobedient *Israelites*:

*When We were without Strength **, utterly ruined, yet absolutely helpless—when None, in Heaven or Earth, could afford Us any Succour—then our **LORD JESUS CHRIST** most graciously and most seasonably interposed. He said, as it is very emphatically represented by *Elihu*; *Deliver them from going down into the Pit; I have found a Ransom †*. He did, what is very beautifully described by our *English Classic*;

————— So Man, as is most just,

Shall satisfy for Man, be judg'd, and die;

And dying rise, and rising with Him raise

His Brethren, ransom'd with his own dear Life ‡.

Ther. But pray, do not You allow, that **CHRIST** is truly and properly **GOD**?

Asp. We not only allow it, but We insist upon it, and make our boast of it. This is the very Foundation of his Merit, and the Support of our Hope.

Ther. This may aggrandize the Merit of **CHRIST**, but it will increase the Difficulty of your Task. For, according to this Opinion, **CHRIST** must make Satisfaction to Himself. And is not this a Practice quite unprecedented? A Notion perfectly absurd?

Asp. It is quite unprecedented, You say.—On this Point, I shall not vehemently contend. Only let me mention one Instance. *Zalencus*, You know, the Prince of the *Lotrians*, made a Decree, That
whoever

* Rom. v. 6.

B. III. 294.

† Job xxxiii. 24.

‡ Mr. 11.

whoever was convicted of Adultery, should be punished with the Loss of both his Eyes. Soon after this Establishment, the Legislator's own Son was apprehended in the very Fact, and brought to a public Trial.—How could the Father proceed, in so tender and delicate a Conjunction?—Should He execute the Law, in all its Rigour? This would be worse than Death to the unhappy Youth.—Should He pardon so notorious a Delinquent? This would defeat the Design of his salutary Institution.—To avoid both these Inconveniencies, He ordered one of his own Eyes to be pulled out, and one of his Son's. By which Means, the Rights of Justice were preserved inviolate; yet the Tenderness of a Parent was remarkably indulged. And may We not venture to say? That, in this Case, *Zaleucus* both received and made the Satisfaction.—Received it, as a Magistrate; even while He made it, as a Father.

Ther. I cannot see, how this Suffering of the Father was, in any Degree, *satisfactory* to the Law: since the Father and the Son could not be considered, as *one* and the *same* Person. It may pass for an extraordinary Instance of parental Indulgence. It may strike the benevolent and compassionate Hearer. But, if tried at the Bar of Equity and Reason, it will hardly be admitted as any legal Satisfaction. It will probably be condemned, as a Breach of Nature's first and fundamental Law, Self-preservation.

Ap. Your Objection, I must confess, has Weight. It will oblige me to give up my Illustration.—Nevertheless, what my Friend urges against the Propriety of the Comparison, tends to establish the

Certainty of the Doctrine. For *CHRIST* and his People are actually considered, as one and the same Person. They are *one mystical Body*: He the Head, they the Members: so intimately united to Him, that they are *Bone of his Bone, and Flesh of his Flesh*. — By Virtue of which Union, their Sins were punished in Him; and *by his Stripes they are healed*: so they obtain Impunity and Life.

Though there may be nothing, in the Procedure of Men, which bears any Resemblance to this Miracle of heavenly Goodness; it receives a sufficient Confirmation from the Language of Scripture. He, who wrote as an Amanuensis to the unerring *SPIRIT*, has declared; That *GOD* was in *CHRIST*, reconciling the World—unto Whom? Unto some third Party? No; but reconciling it, by the Death and Obedience of *CHRIST*—unto Himself. And I can very readily grant, that this divine Exertion of Benignity and Wisdom, should be without a Precedent, and without a Parallel.

Difficulties, I own, may attend the Explication of this Article, or be interwoven with its Consequences. But since our Apprehensions of heavenly Things, especially of the adorable *TRINITY*, are so obscure and inadequate, We may very easily mistake, and fancy that to be absurd, which is

Vol. I. G only
 Eph. ii. 13. on 1. Isai. liii. 5. 1. 2 Cor. v. 19.
 Col. i. 20.

¶ *Fancy*, in the Person of *Horace*, said of *Jupiter* and his fabulous Exploits,
Cui nihil inget simile aut secundum.
 Much more well Reason in the Character of a Believer, say the same of *JEHOVAH*, and his marvellous Grace.

only great, wonderful, and incomprehensible *.—
 Nor let me be thought presumptuous, if I venture
 to add, That it will be impossible, for all the Sa-
 gacity in the World, to prove this Doctrine an *Ab-
 surdity*, though it should ever remain an *inexplicable*
Mystery.—How many Phenomena in the Works of
 external Nature, are confessedly mysterious and in-
 explicable? As to the *Reality* of their Existence,
 they challenge, they command our Assent; as to
 the *Manner* of their Existence, they baffle all our
 Researches, and defy our utmost Penetration. Is
 therefore the Point under Debate, be fully and in-
 contestably revealed in the Bible, We must renounce
 the Philosopher, before We can consistently act the
 Sceptic.

The unparalleled, nay, the incomprehensible Nature of
 this great Transaction, is no Objection to its Truth and
 Reality. This is rather a Circumstance, which perfectly
 agrees with the Testimony of the inspired Writers; and
 affords, in my Opinion, an unanswerable Argument for
 the divine Origin of Christianity.

It agrees with the Testimony of the inspired Writers; who
 call the Work of our Redemption, not only wise, but
Wisdom itself! the *Wisdom of GOD*! his *Wisdom* in a
Mystery! even his *hidden Wisdom*! Or that deep myste-
 rious Plan, which has every Character of the most con-
 summate Wisdom; which was long concealed from Ages
 and Generations; and appears, now revealed, to con-
 tain such a Series of Wonders, as no Understanding of
 Man or Angel can fully penetrate. 1 Cor. II. 7.
 It affords an unanswerable Argument for the divine Ori-
 gin of Christianity. Since it was infinitely too deep for
 the Contrivance of Men, and Angels; since it is ab-
 solutely undiscussable by the most sagacious of created
 Intelligence; how could it be known, but by Manifesta-
 tion from above? Hence could it take its Rise, but
 from an especial Revelation?

Thos. Let Us see then, Whether it be so fully and incontestably revealed in the Bible.—You have given me, as yet, but one of your scriptural Images.

Ass. I have another at your Service.—*CHRIST* is called an *High-Priest*. What do You take to be the Nature of the Priestly Office?

Thos. The Business of the Priest was, I apprehend, To offer Sacrifices, and to make Intercession for the People.

Ass. Very true: and *CHRIST* could not with any Propriety, receive this Appellation, if He had been defective in performing either of the sacerdotal Functions.—Now, that he offered no such Victim as slain Beasts, is universally acknowledged. We might presume therefore, even though We had not the Authority of an Apostle to assure us, That He offered *HIMSELF*, through the eternal *SPIRIT*, to *GOD*.*

The Cross, shall I say †? Rather his divine Nature was the *Altar*. His Soul and Body, each immaculately pure, were the *High-priest*. These He resigned;

G 2

Heb. ix. 14.

† The Cross is, by some Authors, styled The *Altar*. But, I think, improperly. This Notion seems to have sprung from, or given rise to, the *Papist* Practice of idolizing the *Cross*. At least, it countenances such a Kind of *foppish* or sacrilegious Devotion, more than a Protestant Writer could wish.—It was the Property of the *Altar* to *suffer* the *Gift*. This therefore, when referred to our *LORD*'s Sacrifice, is a far more exalted Office, than We dare ascribe to the *Instrument* of his Suffering.—This must be the Honour and Privilege of the *DEITY* IN THE *NATURAL*, which did indeed sanctify the great Oblation: gave it a Dignity, a Merit, an Efficacy, unspeakable and everlasting.

signed; the one, to deadly Wounds; the other, to
unexpressible Anguish; and both, to be instead of
all whole Burnt Offerings. On this invaluable
Oblation, his Intercession at the Right-hand of his
FATHER is founded; from this it derives that
prevailing Efficacy, which is the Security of his
standing, and the Recovery of his fallen Disciples.

Give me Leave to ask farther, What is your Idea
of a Sacrifice? When *Iphigenia* was slain at the
Altar, What was the Import of that memorable
Action?

Ther. It was intended, if We may credit Virgil's Account, to appease the Indignation of some Elementary Deity; and thereby obtain a propitiuous Gale, for the wind-bound Fleet, and confederate Forces of Greece. But, I hope, You would not make that solemn Butchery of the royal Virgin, a Pattern for the supreme Goodness; nor the Practice of gross Idolaters, a Model for the Religion of the holy JESUS.

App. By no means, *Theron*. Only I would observe—That the Custom of offering Sacrifices obtained, among the most cultivated Nations of the Heathen World—That these Sacrifices were frequently of the *vicarious* † Kind; in which the Vic-

and the prevailing Opinions concerning them; *Enim*
non iniquam amplius dolivimus Deum Rationemque What
 we are to understand by *Pianorum*, our Author himself
 explains, in the preceding Clause; *Quicquid Marti doli-*
rum fuerit, in me transferit; quicquid Arelæ, in me. To
 which his judicious Commentator *Lipsius*, from an exten-
 sive Knowledge of Antiquity, adds, *hæc ipse fuit pi-*
loris Victimæ. SENTENTIA. Every thing of

tim was substituted; instead of the Offerer; and the former being cut off, the latter was discharged from Punishment. Consequently, that the *Classic* Authors would (in case there was any Need of such Auxiliaries) join with the *sacred* Writers, to declare the *Expiation*; and explain the *Nature* of Sacrifices. — This also You will permit me to add; That, if the Heathens talk sensibly on any Part of religious Worship, it is on the Subject of Sacrifices. Their Sentiments concerning expiatory Oblations, seem to be the same and distant Echo of Revelation. I have usually considered them, not as the Institutions of mere Reason, but as the Remains of some broken Tradition. — However, the truest and most authentic Signification of a Sacrifice, is to be learned from the *Jewish* Ritual, explained by the Gospel Comment. Do You remember the *Mosaic* Account of that Ordinance? —

G 3 Ther. The same Writer, in the same consolatory Epistle, has another Sentence, still more to our Purpose; *Nobilitatur omnium Carminibus, quæ se pro Conjuge vicariam dedit. — Juvenal*, speaking of the same Fact, expresses Himself in very remarkable Language. Such as shews Us, with the utmost *Clearness* and *Precision*, what the Antients meant, when they affirmed of a suffering or dying Person, That He gave Himself for Another. —

-1A — *Spectat subeuntem Pata Mariti* — *Allegum, & similis si Permutatio datur.* Sat. VI.

There is a Passage in *Livy*, which most of all deserves our Notice. As it seems to imply a popular Belief of the Dignity, the more than human Dignity of the *Sacred*, which was necessary to appease the Wrath of Heaven. It relates to *Decius*, devoting himself for the public Good; *Conspectus ab utraque Acie, aliquanto augustior humano Visu, sicuti Cælo missus, Placulum omnis Deorum Iræ.* Lib. VIII. Cap. ix.

Ther. You are much better acquainted, *Assasio*, with those sacred Antiquities; and can give the most satisfactory Information, with regard to this Particular. Only let me remind You, That *Alms* are styled Offerings; and *Praises*, both in the prophetical and evangelical Writings, come under the Denomination of Sacrifices.

Ass. Though Praises and Alms are styled Sacrifices, they are not of the propitiatory, but eucharistic Kind. They are never said to expiate Transgressions, only are represented as acceptable to GOD through JESUS CHRIST; that divinely precious Victim, whose Merits both cancel our Guilt, and commend our Services! According to—

Ther. Stay a Moment, *Assasio*.—Let me recollect myself.—This may be the Meaning of Sacrifices, as ordained by *Moses*, and solemnized among the *Jews*. —“Sacrifices were a symbolical Address to GOD; intended to express before Him the Devotion, Affections, Dispositions, and Desires of the Heart, by significative and emblematical Actions.”

Ass. This is the first Time, I ever heard of a symbolical Address to GOD. Sacrifices were, if you please, a real Address to GOD, attended with significant Ceremonies, or expressive Symbols.

“They expressed, You say, the Devotion, Affections, Dispositions, and Desires of the Heart.” I rather think, they expressed the Guilt and the Faith of the Offerer.—*His Guilt*; this seems to be intimated, by the very Names of the propitiatory Sacrifices. The Sin and the Sacrifice, the offending Action and the expiatory Rite, being signified

by one and the same Word. It is somewhat more than intimated, by the Occasion of the Offering, and the State of the Offerer. Since it was only on account of Guilt contracted, that peculiar Oblations were made; and only from a guilty Person, that they were required. *His Faith*; or firm Belief, that ceremonial Guilt, which shut Him out from the Communion of the visible Church, and subjected Him to the Infliction of temporal Judgments, was removed by *these*; but that moral Guilt, which defiles the Soul, and excludes from Heaven, should be purged by *some better Sacrifice than these*. In the Exercise of this Faith, *Abel* offered up a more acceptable Sacrifice than *Cain*; and without this Faith, exercised in some Degree, it was impossible to please G O D.

Then If you dislike this Account of Sacrifices, take another. Which, as well as the preceding, I have learned from an eminent Pen. "The Priest made Atonement for Sin, by sacrificing a Beast, only as that was a Sign and Testimony of the Sacrificer's pure and upright Heart."

Alfo So then you would ascribe all the Efficacy of Sacrifices, to the Purity and Uprightness of the Sacrificer. Whereas, I think, they had no Share at all in the Matter. The Types were effectual, only by virtue of their Connection with the great Sacrifice—ordained, in the eternal Counsels of J E H O V A H—prepared, when the S O N of the Most HIGH

Abel denotes a Sin, and Sin-Offering, Lev. iv. 3, 24. *Cain* signifies the Trespass, and the Trespass-Offering, Lev. v. 15, 19.

† They sanctified to the purifying of the Flesh, Heb. ix. 13. But could not make Him that did the Service perfect, as pertaining to the Conscience, Heb. ix. 9.

HIGH was made Flesh—offered, when the blessed JESUS surrendered Himself, to be led as a Lamb to the Slaughter.—They were so far from being independent on this divine Oblation, that they acted in perpetual Subserviency to it, and derived all their Value from it. They were the Shadow, but the Body was CHRIST. And does not the former owe all its Existence to the latter? And if Sacrifices were intended to bespeak Integrity of Heart, methinks, the State of Innocency had been the properest Period, for their Institution and Oblation. But this awful Ceremony had no Existence, till Man was fallen, and Sin committed.—If intended to denote Purity of Heart, why should Sacrifices be particularly enjoined on that solemn Day, when Confession was made of *All the Sins*, of the whole Congregation? Ah oddly concerted Device this; in which the Tongue must contradict, what the Ceremony would recognize. How could it be proper, after the Violation of some Law, or the Neglect of some Ordinance, immediately to go and offer a Sacrifice? What would be the Language of such a Practice, as interpreted by your eminent Pen? “I have done wickedly, but my Heart is pure and upright.” Is this consistent with the Spirit of Humility, of Modesty, or of common Inguinity? Is this the Way of giving Glory to GOD, or of taking Shame to ourselves?—Whereas, let the Sacrifice be a typical Expiation, and this is the Significancy of the Action. “LORD, I confess myself guilty. Punishment and Death are my Due. Let them fall, I be-

“Teach Thee, on my *Victim**. That thy Justice
“being glorified, and thy Law satisfied, thy
“Mercy may be honourably displayed in my For-
“giveness.”

Besides, *Theron*, What *Liberty*, what *Agreement*
is there, between the Profession of Integrity, and
an Animal mortally wounded, wallowing in its
own Blood; and struggling in the Agonies of
Death?—Whereas, between these dying Pangs,
and the Punishment due to Sin, or the Sorrows sus-
tained by the crucified SAVIOUR, there is an
apparent, a striking, and in various Respects, an
edifying Resemblance.

Ther. They declared, perhaps, the Sacrificer's
Readiness and Resolution, to lay the Brute in Him-
self, and to lay down his Life in Adherence to
GOD.

As. I don't remember, to have seen this asserted
in the Bible; neither have I met with any Hint,
to countenance such an Interpretation. It seems,
in some Cases, to be incompatible with the very
Nature of Things, and contrary to the express
Declarations of Scripture.—*Doves*, You know,
Lambs, and *Sheep*, were offered in Sacrifice. But
shall we slay the Lamb, the Dove, the Sheep in
Ourselves? So far from it, that *CHRIST*'s Dis-
ciples are either described by these Creatures, or
commanded to imitate their Properties. *Be ye harm-
less as Doves* †. *Peter, feed my Lambs* ‡. *My Sheep,
hear my Voice* §.

Supposing,

* What says, that Prodigy of oriental Learning, Bo-
chart? *Hoc eodem Ritu Iram Dei Pescator deprecabatur, eam-
que immitti petebat in illius Victimæ Caput, quam suo Loco
ponebat.* *Theron.* Tom. I. Lib. II. Cap. 54.

† Matt. x. 16.

‡ John xxi. 15.

§ John x. 27.

Supposing, however, that, on some Occasions, this might be a subordinate Design, or a valuable Improvement of the sacrificial Act; yet their primary Intention, and ultimate End, were widely different. Were much more significant of the divine Compassions, and much better adapted to the Comfort of Mankind. They were—An *awful Indication*, that Death was the Wages of Sin: At the same Time, a *clearing Declaration*, that GOD was pleased to accept the Death of the Animal, instead of the Sinner's: a *figurative Representation* * also of that illustrious PERSON, who was to bear the Sin of many, and pour out his Soul for Transgressors.

Ther. Since Sacrifices were of a religious Nature, they should not only be instructive and beneficial in their Tendency; but have their *due Effects*, with regard to GOD, to Sin, and to the Person who brought them.

Ass. They had, in all these Instances, their due Effects—with regard to GOD; that his Justice might be magnified, and his Anger appeased *not to Sin*, that its Demerit might be displayed, yet its Guilt be done away—to the Person who brought them; that he might receive Remission of Sins, together with Peace and Joy in believing.

Ther. What says Milton, upon the Subject of Sacrifices, and with reference to their principal Design? He calls them, and very properly,

Religious Rites
Of Sacrifice; informing Men by Types
And Shadows, of that destin'd Seed to bruise
The Serpent, by what means he shall achieve
Mankind's Deliverance.

There There are so many Sorts of Sacrifices, appointed in the Jewish Rubric, that I am at a Loss for a distinct Idea; unless some one be singled out, and separately considered.

App. Among all the Sacrifices instituted by *Moses*, none more circumstantially typified the blessed *YESUS*; none more appositely expressed the Benefits of his Oblation; than the Lamb slain at the Feast of the *Passover*, and the *Sin-offering* on the Day of Atonement.

An Expositor, who cannot be mistaken, has given Us this Interpretation of the Paschal Lamb; *CHRIST* our *Passover* is sacrificed for Us. * Declaring

1 Cor. v. 7. Would any One venture to say? Paul our *Passover* is sacrificed for Us. Yet this, I think, may be, or rather is in effect said, by the Account which some Persons give of *CHRIST*'s Satisfaction: since Paul actually sacrificed his Life; in Confirmation of the Truth, and for the Good of the Church. *Phil. ii. 17.*—The very Thought of such a blasphemous Absurdity, is too painful and offensive for the serious Christian to dwell upon. I would therefore divert his Attention to a more pleasing Consideration. Let Him observe the exquisite Skill, which, here and every where, conducts the Zeal of our inspired Writer. The Odes of *Pindar* are celebrated for their fine Transitions; which, though bold and surprising, are perfectly natural. We have, in this Place, a very masterly Stroke of the same Kind. The Apostle, speaking of the incestuous Criminal, slides into his darling Topic, a crucified SAVIOUR. Who would have expected such a Sentiment, on such an Occasion? Yet, when thus brought in, who does not see and admire, both the Propriety of its Application, and the Delicacy of its Introduction?—With the same easy and graceful Air, our sacred Orator enters upon his Subject, *Rom. i. 14, 15, 16.* With no less Dexterity and Address He returns to it, after a long but very useful Digression, *Heb. vi. 20.* compared with *Heb. x. 10.*

declaring hereby—That *CHRIST* is a real Sacrifice—That He was prefigured, in this Capacity, by the Paschal Lamb—That the Circumstances, which distinguished it, met in Him; and the Advantages, which resulted from it, were procured by Him: *these*, in their truest Import; *these*, in their largest Extent.—The Words of the Apostle speak this Sense, to the plainest simplest Reader. Where, as, to extort any other Signification from them, what Subtilty of Wit, and what Refinement, or rather Violence of Criticism, must be used!

The Paschal Lamb was without Blemish. Such was the *LAMB* of *GOD*: free from all Taint of original Sin, and from every Spot of actual Transgression.—A Lamb of the first Year, in all the Sprightliness and Floridity of Youth. *CHRIST* also laid down his Life, not when worn with Age, or debilitated with Sickness; but in the very Prime of his Days: amidst all the Bloom of Health, and all the Vigour of Manhood. That his Sacrifice might have every recommending Circumstance, which could render it acceptable to *GOD*, and available for Man.

The Lamb was to be slain in such a Manner, as might occasion the most copious Effusion of its Blood. And was not this very exactly fulfilled in our suffering *SAVIOUR*? His Blood flowed out, in vast Abundance, by the amazing Sweat, in the Garden; by the rending Lashes of the Scourge; by the lacerating Points of the Thorns; by the dreadful Nails, which cleft his Hands and his Feet; by the deadly Spear, which ripped open his Side, and cut its Way to his Heart.—Though the Blood was to be so liberally spilt, a Bone of the Lamb was

not to be broken. And You cannot but recollect, You cannot but admire, the wonderful Interposition of Providence, to accomplish this emblematical Prediction. When the Soldiers had received a Command, to break the Legs of the three crucified Persons; when they had actually broke the Legs of each Malefactor, which hung on the right Side of our LORD, and on the left; their Minds were over-ruled (by a divine Influence, no doubt) to spare the blessed JESUS, and to leave all his Bones unburst, untouched.

The Lamb was to be killed before the whole Assembly; in the Presence, either of the whole Congregation of Israel, or else of that particular Society, which concurred in eating the Flesh. And did not the whole Multitude of the Jews conspire against our REDEEMER, to put Him to death? Did they not all cry out, as with one Voice? Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Was He not executed, at one of their grand Festivals, and in the Sight of the whole Assembled Nation?—The Blood was not to be poured heedlessly upon the Ground, but received carefully into a Basin; and sprinkled, with the utmost Punctuality. Sprinkled, not upon the Threshold, but upon the Lintel and Door-post. In like Manner, the Blood of the heavenly LAMB, is not to be trampled under Foot, by a contemptuous Disregard. It is the Treasure of the Church, and the Medicine of Life. To be received therefore by an adoring Faith, and most thankfully applied to our Consciences, our Conversation, our whole Man.—The Sprinkling of that Blood secures us from all manner of Sin, and gives us a right Title to the Kingdom of Heaven. He will have recourse to

So, the Merits of the slaughtered SAVIOUR, forsook every believing Sinner, from the Stroke of offended Justice, and from the Pains of eternal Death. What must have become of the *Israelite*, who, trusting to the Uprightness of his Heart, should neglect to make use of this divinely appointed safeguard? He must inevitably have been punished with the Death of his First-born. Equally certain, but infinitely more dreadful, will be his Condemnation; who, before the Omniscient JUDGE, shall presume to plead his own Integrity, or confide in his own Repentance, and reject the Atonement of the dying JESUS.

Ther. Now, if You please, for the *Sin-offering* which seems to have been the most eminent Sacrifice of them all.

Asp. It was the most *comprehensive*; because, it shadowed forth, not only the Death of CHRIST, but his Resurrection from the Dead, and his Ascension into Heaven. — As the various Actions of some

Both St. Peter and St. Paul speak of *The Blood of Sprinkling*. 1 Pet. ii. 2. Heb. xii. 24. Intimating, by this remarkable Form of Speech, that the Death of CHRIST will be of no Advantage to the Sinner, unless it be applied to his Heart. As the Blood of the Paschal Lamb was no Protection to an *Israelite*, till it had tinged the Posts of his Door. — *Isaiah*, using the same Phrase, and alluding to the same Custom, says of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, *He shall sprinkle many Nations*, li. 15. Not only initiate them into his Church by Baptism; but also, by the Application of his Blood, shall cleanse them from their Guilt, and deliver them from the Wrath to come.

For the Circumstances relating to the *Sin-offering*, the Reader will consult Lev. xii. — For those which concern the *Paschal Lamb*, He will have recourse to Exod. xii.

Myriads of Persons, which cannot be exhibited by the Painter in a single Draught, are displayed in several Compartments; yet all constitute one and the same grand historical Picture. So, these glorious Events, incapable of being represented by any single Animal, were typified by two Kids of the Goats, which nevertheless were reputed, but as one Offering.

These Goats were brought to the Door of the Tabernacle, and there presented before the LORD.

CHRIST

How runs the divine Command? He (the High-Priest) shall take of the Congregation two Kids of the Goats for a Sin-offering. Lev. xvi. 5. Are not these two Kids styled, in the singular Number and collective Sense, an Offering?—That We might not mistake, GOD is pleased to add; And one Ram for a Burnt-offering. Here He particularly mentions one; to inform Us, that the one Ram in this Institution, and the two Goats in the preceding, were to come under the same general Denomination, An Offering. To render his Meaning still more apparent; the LORD, contrary to his own Rule in all other Cases, orders the High-Priest to lay his Hands upon the Head of the Scape-Goat, not upon the Head of the Goat devoted to Death. He divides the necessary Circumstances of a Sacrifice between them both. To intimate, in the clearest Manner, that neither the One nor the Other separate, but both taken together, were the one sacrificial Oblation, appointed for this distinguished Solemnity. If this be true, I think, the Passage is a pretty considerable Proof, That atonement was made by suffering various Punishments; notwithstanding what has been urged against it, from the tenth Verse of the Chapter. Should We require human Authority for the Support of this Interpretation, one of the greatest human Authorities may be seen in the celebrated *Wissenshaft des Herrn*, *Alte und Neue Testamente*, *De Oeconomia Lib. III. Cap. vi.*

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— Theſe Goats were brought to the Door of the Tabernacle, and there preſented before the LORD.

— *CHRIST*

How runs the divine Command? *He* (the High-Prieſt) ſhall take of the Congregation two Kids of the Goats for a ſin-offering. Lev. xvi. 5. Are not theſe two Kids ſtyled, in the ſingular Number and collective Senſe, an Offering? — That We might not miſtake, GOD is pleaſed to add; *And one Ram for a Burnt-offering.* Here He particularly mentions *one*; to inform Us, that the *one Ram* in this Inſtitution, and the two Goats in the preceding, were to come under the ſame general Denomination, *An Offering.* To render his Meaning ſtill more apparent; the LORD, contrary to his own Rule in all other Caſes, orders the High-Prieſt to lay his Hands upon the Head of the Scape-Goat, not upon the Head of the Goat devoted to Death. He divides the neceſſary Circumſtances of a Sacrifice between them both. To intimate, in the cleareſt Manner, that neither the One nor the Other ſeparate, but both taken together, were the ſole ſacrificial Oblation; appointed for this diſtinguiſhed Solemnity. If this be true, I think, the Paſſage is a pretty conſiderable Proof, That *atonement* was made by ſuffering *vicarious* Punishment; notwithstanding what has been urged againſt it, from the tenth Verſe of the Chapter. — Should We require human Authority for the Support of this Interpretation, one of the greateſt human Authorities may be ſeen in the celebrated *Wiſſius*, *ſynonymiſm* *per ſingularia ad communem ſignificationem pro Pecunia, Hoſtia unus ſolar. Aliquaſque Pecunia ſingulariſi, unicuique ſingulari Pecunia. De Pecunia ſingulari. De Pecunia ſingulari. De Pecunia ſingulari.*

CHRIST also presented Himself before **GOD**, when He went up to Jerusalem, that all things written by the Prophets concerning Him might be accomplished *. — The Goat, on which the **LORD'S** Lot fell, was devoted to Death. **CHRIST** also, being delivered by the detestable Council and Foreknowledge of **GOD** †, was crucified and slain.

The Body was burnt without the Camp. Which pointed at the very Black, and pictured out the very Nature, of our **LORD'S** Sufferings. For He suffered without the Gate ‡: was there exposed to the Rage of Men, and the Wrath of **GOD**; under the most exquisite Pains of Body, and the most insupportable Agonies of Soul. All significantly typified, by the Flame of a devouring Fire. Than which nothing is more fierce, nothing more penetrating, or more severely tormenting.

As the Animal which was slaughtered, shewed forth the **REDEEMER** dying for our Sins; that which escaped, prefigured the same **SAVIOUR**, rising again for our Justification. — The High Priest put his Hands upon the Head of the Scape Goat, and with great Solemnity, confessed the Sins of the whole Congregation. The Import of this Ceremony is expressly declared in the sacred Canon; *The Goat shall bear upon Him their Iniquity* §.

It is most comfortably explained by the Prophet, *The LORD laid on HIM the Iniquity of Us all* ¶, and

most fully confirmed by the Evangelists, *He bore our Iniquities* ||. — **Luke** xiii. 32, **Gal.** i. 4, **1 Pet.** ii. 24.

It is observable, that whereas the Scape Goat is said to bear the Sins of **Israel**, **Lev.** xvi. 22. the very same Phrase is applied to **CHRIST**, **1 Pet.** ii. 24.

§ **Isa.** liii. 6.

most delightfully confirmed by the Apostle, *He Himself bore our Sins in his own Body on the Tree* *.

Confession being made, the Goat was dismissed into a *Land not inhabited*: a Place separated from all Resort of Men: where he was never likely to be found any more. To teach Us, That our Offences, having been expiated by the bleeding *JESUS*, are entirely done away; shall never rise up in judgment against Us; but, according to the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, *When the Iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, there shall be none; and the Sins of Judah, they shall not be found* †.—It is farther enjoined, That *Aaron shall confess all the Iniquities of the Children of Israel, and all their Transgressions, in all their Sins*. *Iniquities, Transgressions, Sins*, are particularized; and, to this Cluster of Expressions, the Word *all* is added. To inform Us, that the *least* Sins need the Atonement of *CHRIST*'s Death; to assure Us, that the greatest Sins are not beyond the Compass of its Efficacy; and that *all* Sins, be they ever so heinous, or ever so numerous, are forgiven to the true Believer.

The High-Priest carried the Blood of the Victim into the second Tabernacle, even *within the Veil*. So *CHRIST* entered with his own Blood, not into the Holy Places made with Hands, but into *Heaven itself* †.—The Blood was sprinkled upon the Mercy-seat, before the Mercy-seat; and left in the Holy of Holies, that it might always remain before the *LORD*. And does not *CHRIST* always appear in the Presence of *GOD* for Us? Does He not *ever live* to make Intercession for Us? To plead his all-sufficient Propitiation in our Behalf?

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H

That

* 1 Pet. ii. 24. † Jer. i. 20. ‡ Heb. ix. 24.

That the Benefits procured thereby, may be communicated, may be ratified, and perpetuated to his People?

Ther. The Scripture ascribes these Benefits, to Repentance and Reformation of Life, Qualifications of *our own*; not to any such Cause, as a vicarious Sacrifice; where the Merit must necessarily subsist in *another*. What says the Apostle *Peter*, when He had just received his Instructions from the HOLY GHOST? *Repent and be converted, not look unto an Atonement, or depend upon a Propitiation, that your Sins may be blotted out* *.

Ass. 'Tis true, the Benefits of the new Covenant are promised to Penitents, as their happy Portion; but never assigned to their Repentance, as the *procuring Cause*. Never to their Repentance, but to the Blood of the great HIGH-PRIEST, called therefore *The Blood of the everlasting Covenant* †: being the Condition stipulated in it, required by it, and in Consequence of which, all its unspeakable Privileges are bestowed.

Besides; the Qualifications You suppose, are the Gift of the LORD. We are not able to exercise, till *CHRIST*, who is exalted for this very Purpose, gives Repentance †.—A Conversion to GOD, and a Newness of Life, are not the Effect of human Abilities, but the Work of the Divine SPIRIT, and the Fruit of the REDEEMER'S Death.—Exclusive of this Death, there had been no such Thing, as a repenting Sinner, or a renewed Soul.—The Merit of this Death opens the Heaven of Heavens, and all its inexhaustible Stores.

* Acts ii. 19.

† Heb. xiii. 20. † Acts i. 31.

By this Death, by this alone, We have the Enjoyment of Grace, and the Hope of Glory.

Ther. You begin to be in Raptures, *Assasio!*

Ass. Excuse me, *Theron.* It is not easy to repress the Sallies of Delight and Devotion, when we muse upon such Wonders of Loving-kindness; when We are touched with a Sense of such immensely rich Benefits.—A great HIGH-PRIEST! Who is higher than the Heavens *; yet humbled Himself to Death, even the Death of the Cross!—Who is consecrated for evermore †; and pleads all his Merit, improves all his Influence, for our consummate Felicity!

*What Heart of Stone but glows at Thoughts like These?
Such Contemplations mount Us, and should mount
The Mind still higher; nor ever glance in Man
Unraptur'd, uninflam'd ‡.*

But I check myself; and will either reply to your Objections, or listen to your Sentiments. Listen as attentively, as You Yourself attend to the Music of that *shrill-tongued Thrush.*

Ther. Its sweetly-modulated Lays, eminent even in the Symphony of Spring, have indeed attracted my Ears. But my Mind is disengaged, and free for your Conversation.

Ass. I can repeat a Song, sweeter far than this, or all the Melody of the Woodland Choirs. A Song, which has Harmony enough, to make the Brow of Melancholy wear a Smile, or to sooth away the Sorrows of Death itself. *Who shall lay any Thing*

H 2

to

* Heb. vii. 26.
Thoughts, N° IV.

† Heb. vii. 28.

‡ Night-

to the Charge of GOD's Elect? It is GOD that justifieth. Who is He that condemneth? It is CHRIST that died; yea rather, that is risen again; who is even at the Right-hand of GOD; who also maketh Intercession for Us *.—According to my Friend's Principles, the Strain of this triumphant Exclamation was ill-judged, and should have run in the following Manner: "Who shall lay any thing to our Charge? "We have endeavoured to preserve a Rectitude of "Disposition, and to persist in a laudable Course "of Action. Wherever We failed, We have "been sorry for the Fault, and have implored Par- "don from the Divine MAJESTY. What "then shall dismay Us? Or who shall condemn "Us?"—Your Topics of Consolation would be complete, without having recourse to the Death of CHRIST, as an Atonement for Sin; or to the Resurrection of CHRIST, as an Evidence that the Atonement is accepted; or to the Intercession of CHRIST, as the Cause of our Interest in that transcendent Blessing.

Ther. Since You so frequently mention, and so earnestly insist upon *Atonement*, I should be glad to know the precise Signification of the Word. I am told, the original Phrase has nothing to do with the Idea of making Satisfaction.

Asp. We may learn the precise Signification of Atonement, by considering The Means; the Effect; and the Manner, whereby the Means accomplish the Effect.—The *Effect* of Atonement, is Pardon—The *Means* of obtaining it, are the Sacrifice and Death of CHRIST—The *Way* or
Manner,

Manner, whereby the Death of *CHRIST* becomes efficacious for this blessed Purpose, is the sovereign Appointment of his *FATHER*; the infinite Dignity of his Person; and especially the vicarious Nature of his Sufferings, or their being undergone in the Stead of Sinners.

Ther. It has been supposed, and is affirmed too, that our *SAVIOUR*'s Obedience and Death were conducive to our Redemption, *only* in virtue of His *FATHER*'s Will and Appointment.

Asp. I am glad it is some Other, and not my *Theron*, who espouses this Opinion. Which is highly injurious to the *Dignity* of our *REDEEMER*'s Person, and to the *Merit* of his Obedience.—Neither is it very honourable to the Wisdom of the *FATHER*; unless We suppose Him *therefore* to have appointed the Death of *CHRIST*, because He knew it would be a *plenary* Satisfaction; fully sufficient for the glorious Purpose.

And why should We use that weak inadequate Expression, *conducive* to our Redemption? Would any One say, of the “holy and beautiful House” which *Salomon* built, That it was conducive to the Accomplishment of what *Moses* foretold *?—*David*'s Provision of Stones, of Timber, and of Gold †, was, if You please, conducive to it. But *Salomon*'s Act was *perfective* of it; was the very Execution of the Thing itself. Such are the Obedience and Death of *CHRIST*, with respect to our Redemption.

Ther. But We forget the original Word, and neglect to enquire into its true Meaning.

H 3

Asp.

* Exod. xv. 17.

† 1 Chron. xxix. 2.

Ass. The Word, which We translate *Atonement*, implies, in its primary Acceptation, the Notion of *Covering*. Thus the Ark was covered *, *was overlaid with Pitch, within and without*: that all its Chinks might be secured, against the insinuating Force of the Water; and all its Timber defended, from the Injuries of the liquid Element.—When an Object, in this or any other Manner, is covered over for Safety; the Covering receives every Shock, and sustains all Damages, which would otherwise fall upon the Thing covered. The Image, therefore, is very pertinently used, to express the true evangelical Nature of Atonement; and the Word is used, with equal Propriety, to describe the *Mercy-seat* †. Which was a costly Covering for the Ark, made of pure Gold, and exactly commensurate to that sacred Repository. In this were lodged the Tables of the Law; whose Precepts We have violated, and to whose Curse We were subject. Consequently the Mercy-seat, both by its Situation, its Extent, and its Office, prefigured the REDEEMER. Who, all pure and spotless, intervenes between the Law and the Offender; fulfils the Commands, and sustains the Curse of the former; merits Pardon, and procures Salvation for the latter.

Observe some delicate Flower. Having entertained our Eye with one beautiful Colour, it suddenly

* *וַיִּכְסֵה* Thou shalt besmeer, cover, or overlay, Gen. vi. 14. This is the first Place, in which our Word occurs. It is supposed to give Us the genuine and native Sense of the Phrase—Perhaps, the *English* Expression *cover*, may be derived from the Participle *כָּסָה* *cover*.

† *כִּפֹּרֶת* *Exod. xxv. 17.*

denly breaks, or gradually softens into another, and gives Us a renewed Pleasure. Such, methinks, is the Import of this delightful Word. — Besides the preceding Signification, it is expressive of *Hoar-frost* *. Which, in a serene, but sharp wintry Morning, covers the Houses; covers the Trees; covers the whole Face of the Earth. So, the Blood of JESUS, according to the Psalmist's Representation, covers † all our Guilt, and hides every Offence. Inasmuch that, when this Blood is applied by the Divine SPIRIT, the LORD *sees no Iniquity in Jacob* †. He acts, as if He saw none; neither punishes the Sinner, though his Conduct has been ever so criminal; nor abhors the Sinner, though his Person has been ever so polluted.

The same Expression is used with reference to a *Covenant*, and signifies the *Abolition* of the Contract ‖. Which was done by cancelling the Deed; expunging the Articles of Stipulation, or reducing them to one intire Blot. By the Covenant of Works, all Mankind became obnoxious to Condemnation;

H 4

were

* פֶּהַר Psal. cxlvii. 16. The Idea deduced from *Hoar-frost*, is not so exact and striking, in our northern Clime, as in the more southern Regions. There, the Exhalations and Dews being more copious, the Hoar-Frost must fall thicker, lie deeper, and more fully correspond with the Notion of Covering.

† Psal. xxxii. 1.

‡ Numb. xxiii. 21.

‖ Isai. xxviii. 18. פֶּהַר *abolebitur*. *Proprie sonat, obli-
nietur, obliterabitur. Est enim פֶּהַר Hebræis proprie quid
obducere, atque inde (cum obducta & oblita dispareant) de-
lere, aboler.* (Thus, I apprehend, the Words should be
pointed. According to the present Punctuation, at least
in my Edition, I can make out neither Syntax nor Sense.)
*Alluditur hoc loco ad Fœdera Scripto comprehensa, quæ abo-
lentur & irrita fiunt, si Scriptura inducatur, cancellatur,
antiquetur, obliteretur. VATRING. in loc.*

were bound over to Death. By the Grace of *CHRIST*, our Obligation to Punishment is disannulled, and the *Hand-writing of Condemnation is blotted out*.—Should You ask, *How* this is effected? By paying a Ransom, and offering a Sacrifice.—Should You farther enquire, *Of what* this Ransom and this Sacrifice consisted? Of nothing less than the precious Blood *, the inestimable Life †, the divinely magnificent Person of *CHRIST* ‡.

Ther. These then are the capital Ideas included in the original Word, a Covering by way of *Defence*; a Covering by way of *Concealment*; and a Blotting, in order to *cancel*.

Asp. They are, *Theron*.—As the Brain (the Source of Sensation) sends out various Detachments of Nerves, to animate and actuate all the Parts of the vital System: So, this capital Idea, the Idea of *Atonement*, branches itself into a Variety of subordinate, yet similar Significations. Which run through the whole Oeconomy of the Gospel, to enliven and quicken the Spirit of a Believer. Let me instance in a few Particulars. This richly significant Word denotes—The Exercise of divine Mercy ||—The Pardon of Sin §—A Cleansing from Guilt ¶—Purging from Transgression †—Reconciliation for Iniquity **—The Pacifying of Wrath.

* *Not by the Blood of Goats and Calves, but by his own Blood.* Heb. ix. 12.

† *The Son of Man came to give his Life a Ransom for Many.* Mark x. 45.

‡ *Who through the eternal SPIRIT offered Himself without Spot to GOD.* Heb. ix. 14.

|| Deut. xxxii. 43. § Deut. xxi. 8. 2 Chron. xxx. 18.

¶ Numb. xxxv. 33. † Psal. lxxv. 3.

** Dan. ix. 24.

Wrath *.—Do not these Passages (each expressed by some Branch of the Verb, which conveys to Us the Idea of *atoning*) plainly intimate—That the Atonement of *CHRIST* is the meritorious Cause of all these desirable Effects; is the Foundation of every Act of divine Goodness; and of every Blessing vouchsafed to Sinners?

Ther. After all, *this* is the Consideration, which principally offends and perplexes me—*GOD* is a Spirit; an absolutely perfect and infinitely pure Being; remote, inconceivably remote, from whatever is gross or corporeal. How then can He take pleasure, in the Effusion of Blood, or the Burning of Flesh? How can any such *low carnal* Inducements, make Him merciful to Sinners; or appease, what You call, his Wrath?

Assp. Rather, what the *Scriptures* call his Wrath.—You mistake our Doctrine, my dear *Theron*. We never maintain, that any Sacrifice whatever, not even the Propitiation of *CHRIST*'s Death, was intended to *make* *GOD* merciful. Only to *make way* for his eternal Purposes of Mercy †, without any Prejudice either to the Demands of his Law, or the Rights of his Justice.—Our Sentiments on this Head, are exactly consonant to his own Declaration, and to his own Procedure, in the Case of *Job*'s calumniating Friends ‡. Though displeased with

* Ezek. xvi. 63.

† *וְהוּא רַחוּם יְכַפֵּר עוֹן* Psal. lxxviii. 38. Which, exactly translated, speaks to this Effect. *HE, being full of Compassion, forgave their Sins through an Atonement.* Being full of Compassion, here is the first impulsive Cause—through an Atonement, this is the proper appointed Way—of granting Forgiveness.

‡ See Job xlii. 7, 8.

with their Conduct, He was merciful to their Persons. Nevertheless, He would not exercise that Mercy, till they had first offered a Sacrifice, and acted Faith in a dying SAVIOUR.

Neither is it ever supposed; That the infinitely wise and pure GOD; can take Pleasure in the Effusion of Blood, or the Burning of Flesh, simply considered. This is disclaimed by the HOLY GHOST; *Burnt-offerings and Offering for Sin Thou wouldest not, neither hadst Pleasure therein.* The LORD had no Regard to them; took no Complacency in them; only as they bore a Reference to that noble and inestimable Sacrifice, which brings the highest Honour to his Name; which those slaughtered Animals exhibited in a Figure; and to which every true *Israelite* had a believing Regard.

I say, had a believing Regard. For, it is affirmed by the Author to the *Hebrews*, That the Gospel was preached to the *Israelites* in the Wilderness*.—*What* does He mean by the Gospel? The very Essence of this benevolent Scheme, according to the Apostle's own Definition, is, That *CHRIST* died for our Sins†.—*How* was this Gospel preached to our Fathers in the Wilderness? It was preached to their Eyes, by many expressive Emblems; especially, by slaughtered Animals, and bleeding Victims. By which *CHRIST* was almost continually, though not so evidently as in these latter Times, set forth crucified for Sinners.

In this Sense alone, those carnal Usages were worthy the Wisdom of GOD to appoint, and the Majesty

* Heb. iv. 2. † 1 Cor. xv. 3. ‡ Gal. iii. 1.

Majesty of GOD to accept.—This gave them a peculiar Dignity and Importance; and set them far above all the similar Observances; used in the Heathen Worship.—They were also, when thus explained, thus improved, extremely profitable to Believers; as they directed their Contemplation to the future Sufferings of a SAVIOUR*, and ratified to their Faith the Benefits of his ever-operating Sacrifice. Which, We are assured by an infallible Voice, was effectual for the Redemption of the Transgressions under the first Covenant†.

* See Isai. liii. Luke xxiv. 25, 26. Acts xvii. 3.

† Heb. ix. 15. When I reflect on these Words, I wonder how any One can assert, That all the Jews died under the Curse of the Law.—Died under the Curse of the Law! Even though the Apostle has warranted it for a Truth, That All these (meaning Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, &c.) died in Faith. Heb. xi. 13.—Even though He has elsewhere laid it down as a Maxim, So then they which are of Faith, in whatever Period of Time they live, or under whatever Dispensation of Religion they worship, are blessed with faithful Abraham. Gal. iii. 9.—Even though the Psalmist, in one Place, affirms, Blessed are they whose Unrighteousnesses are forgiven, and whose Sin is covered. And, in another Place, declares concerning Himself and his pious Cotemporaries; Look how wide the East is from the West! So far hath He set our Sins from Us. Psalm xxxii. 1. Psalm ciii. 12.

From these and many other Texts, I think, it is evident, That the faithful Jews no more died under the Curse of the Law, than the faithful Christians. The Death of CHRIST procured the Pardon and Acceptance of Sinners, even before He came in the Flesh. From the Beginning, He had covenanted with the FATHER, as their MEDIATOR: and GOD, to whom all Things are present, saw the certain Accomplishment of his Undertaking. He was therefore, by Virtue of the divine Decree, and in Point of saving Efficacy, A LAMB slain from the Foundation of the World. Though He laid down his Life in the Reign of Tiberius, He was a real REDEEMER in all Ages.

Ther. So You apprehend, that, in those Usages, practised by the ancient *Jews*, the Gospel was *emblematically* preached, and *CHRIST* in a *Figure* exhibited.

Ass. Most certainly, *Tberon*. And for this Cause, under the Law, *almost all Things were purged with Blood* *. The Multiplicity, the Variety, the Constancy of their Sacrifices, were all designed to impress upon their Minds, and familiarize to their Thoughts, this great evangelical Truth.—Was any One overtaken by a Fault? He must present a Victim, and the Priest must slay it, by way of *Trespass-offering*. To signify, that the Guilt which was contracted, could be done away only by the atoning Death of *CHRIST*.—Had any One received a signal Blessing? A Beast was slain by way of *Peace-offering*; as a public Expression of Gratitude for the Mercy, and also as an emphatical Declaration, that all Good vouchsafed to fallen Man, is owing to the *REDEEMER's* Ransom.—Was any One to be invested with the *priestly* Office, or admitted to minister in the Sanctuary? A Ram or a Bullock must bleed, for the Purposes of Consecration and Atonement †. In order to testify, that no Man can officiate with Acceptance in the Worship of *GOD*: that no Service, though of a religious Kind, can be pleasing in his Sight, *till* the former is interested in the Merits, *unless* the latter is recommended by the Death, of the great *HIGH-PRIEST*:

And not only by their solemn sacrificial Acts, but even by their ordinary Meals, this grand Lesson was inculcated. They were forbidden to eat the Blood,

in
* Heb. ix. 22. † Lev. viii. 22. Numb. viii. 12.

in order to awaken and preserve in their Consciences, a reverential and fiducial Regard to the precious Blood of *CHRIST*. The *HOLY GHOST*, assigning a Reason for this sacred Prohibition, says expressly; *Because the Blood maketh an Atonement for Your Souls* * : the Blood of Beasts typically, the Blood of *CHRIST* effectually. — O! that *Christians* would, in this Particular, learn of *Jews*. Learn, at least, from *Jewish* Ordinances, to have their Attention incessantly fixed on that Divine *HIGH-PRIEST*; who, by one Offering, hath perfected for ever—not barely “conducted or contributed to the “Work,” but fully accomplished it. Hath obtained complete and everlasting Redemption for them that are sanctified †.

Ther. Some Offerings were made without any Effusion of Blood. What could those mean? Or how could they typify the Sacrifice of *CHRIST*?

Asp. Perhaps, the Apostle might foresee such an Objection, when He made use of that guarded Expression, *almost all Things were purged with Blood*. — If, in these Cases, there was no Effusion of Blood, yet there was a Destruction of the Substance. The *Meat-offerings* were consumed by Fire. Which is much the same to inanimate Things, as shedding of the Blood is to living Creatures. — The same Effect is ascribed to these Oblations, as to those of the sanguinary Kind. It is expressly declared of the poor Man's *Sin-offering*, which consisted of fine Flour, and was burnt upon the Altar, *It shall make an Atonement for Him* †. — So that Here also was, what We may truly call a *visible Prediction* of *CHRIST*.

* Lev. xvii. 11. † Heb. x. 14. † Lev. v. 11, 12, 13.

CHRIST. The Offerings which flamed, as well as the Victims which bled, shewed forth our dying **LORD.** Whose "one Oblation of Himself once offered," comprised all the Qualities, and realized the whole Efficacy, represented by every other Sacrifice.

Ther. Another odd Circumstance has often given me Disgust, and been apt to prejudice me against the Institutions of the Old Testament. Many of them appear mean, contemptible, and perfectly *puerile*. "Can these, I have said within myself, be ordained by a **GOD** of infinite Wisdom, and transcendent Glory? Can We reasonably imagine, that a Mandate should be issued from the Court of Heaven, on purpose to forbid the *Boiling*, and *injoin* the *Roasting* †, of some particular Piece of Meat?—Will the great **RULER** of the Skies, concern Himself about the precise Manner of *killing* one insignificant Bird, and *releasing* another ‡?—Will He, who claims the Worship of the Heart, have such an especial Regard to a Drop or two of despicable Blood, put upon the *Tip* of the Right ear, or the *Thumb* of the Right-hand ||?—Surely, such childish Ceremonies are too minute and trivial for the Notice, much more for the solemn Appointment, of the supreme **MAJESTY**.

Asp. For this Reason, it is thought, the Apostle styles the Sacrifice of **CHRIST**, *puriori Jovari, Better Sacrifices*. Because, this one Sacrifice comprehended the whole Virtue, and procured every Benefit, signified by all the other. *Heb. ix. 23.*

† *Exod. xii. 9.* ‡ *Lev. xiv. 4, 5, 6, 7.*
|| *Exod. xxix. 20.*

Ap. You will please to remember, that, when those Ceremonies were ordained, it was the *Infancy**, at least the *Minority* of the Church. If We advert to this Circumstance, We shall have Reason to admire, both the all-comprehending Wisdom, and the no less condescending Goodness, of JEHOVAH. — *His all-comprehending Wisdom*, in conforming so accurately and so minutely, the Type to the Event. Though the former was established long, long before the latter existed. Many Ages before the *Desire of Nations* appeared, his Picture was drawn; was presented to public View; and is now found to correspond, in every Feature, with the illustrious Original. What Hand could be equal to such a Task? Only the Hand of an Omniscient L I M N E R. — *His condescending Goodness*, in adapting the Tenour of his Revelation to the State of his People; *speaking unto them, even as unto Babies* †. Not by naked Precepts, or abstracted Truths; but by earthly Similitudes ‡, and (if I may so express myself) by embodied

* St. Paul calls the Church of those Times *an Infant*, or *Babe*, Gal. iv. 1, 3. And the ceremonial Institutions have been styled, with as much Truth as Ingenuity, *Evangelium elementare & preliminare*.

† 1 Cor. iii. 1.

‡ This seems to be our LORD's Meaning, when He says to *Nicodemus*, *If I have told you earthly Things*. He had been treating of that internal spiritual *Renovation*, which is the Root and Spring of all Holiness. He had been speaking of that Divine SPIRIT, whose gracious and almighty Agency produces this desirable Change. The Nature of the former was represented, under the Similitude of a *Birth*; by which We enter upon a new State, and habituate Ourselves to new Practices, Pleasures, Pursuits. The Operations of the latter were described, by the common and well-known Properties

embodied Instructions. Such as were level to their low Capacities, and calculated to affect their dull Apprehensions.

The Institutions to which You allude, were undoubtedly mean and trifling, if considered *in themselves*. Accordingly, their majestic AUTHOR cautions his People, against such erroneous and unworthy Notions. “*I spake not unto your Fathers, nor commanded them, in the Day that I brought them out of the Land of Egypt, concerning Burnt-offerings, or Sacrifices*.” It was not my Design, that they should acquiesce in the Shadow, and neglect the Substance. I never intended, that they should rest in the Porch; but pass through these inferior Ordinances, to much sublimer Things. *CHRIST* and spiritual Blessings were principally in my View. To which all the *Mosaic* Usages were relative, subservient, and one continual Manduction.”—Considered in this Light; as bearing a Reference to the ever-blessed MEDIATOR; as Emblems of his Person, or Pledges of his Grace; they acquire a real Magnificence, and convey the most salutary Lessons.

The Blood put upon the Tip of the Right-Ear, and the Thumb of the Right-Hand, denotes our *personal* Application of the Death of *CHRIST*. Without which all its Virtue, though boundless and

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ties of the Wind.—This He mentions as a plain and familiar Method of teaching: this He opposes to the more elevated Strain of *telling Him heavenly Things*; or delivering refined and exalted Truths, not accommodated to a low Capacity, not brought within the Compass of an infantile Understanding, by an Assimilation to sensible Objects. *John iii. 12.*

* Jer. vii. 22.

and inconceivable, will profit Us nothing. Those particular Parts of the Body, may signify the *perceptive* and *executive* Faculties: in both which We offend, and for both which We need the great Propitiation.—Of the two Birds You mention, one was to be *killed*, the other was to *fly away*, after it had been dipped in the Blood of its Fellow, Thus the *LORD JESUS* was slain for our Sins: and We being *washed* in his Blood; being interested in the Atonement of our holy Victim, and elder Brother; are acquitted from Guilt, and *escape* Condemnation.—Concerning the *Paschal Lamb*, it was particularly enjoined; That the *Flesh should not be eaten raw, nor sodden with Water, but roasted with Fire*. As to every Offering from the Herd or from the Flock, the Fat and the Inwards were, by an express Command of GOD, delivered up to the devouring Flame. All this was an Emblem of that tremendous Indignation, which is *poured out like Fire* *; which *seized* our immaculate SACRIFICE, that it might *spare* polluted Sinners; and which must have consumed utterly any Mediator, who was less than infinite, or other than divine.

Had You, while unacquainted with experimental Philosophy, beheld our renowned *Newton*; blowing, with great Assiduity and Attention, his little watery Bladders into the Air; You would, probably, have despised the venerable Philosopher, and have thought him an *heavy Idiot*. But when You was made to understand; That, in every one of those volatile sopy Bubbles, He discovered the beauteous *Colours* of the *Rain-bow*; That, from this seemingly childish

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Experi-

* Nah. i. 6.

Experiment, He explained the Formation of the finest Appearance in Nature; You would then entertain a different Notion both of the Man and of his Employ.—So, when You discern the blessed *JESUS*, looking forth at these Windows, and shewing Himself through these Lattices* of the Jewish Oeconomy; You will, I hope, conceive a higher Opinion of them, and derive richer Advantage from them.

Ther. There are several Persons, as well as ritual Observances, of a very singular Character, mentioned in the *Mosaic Law*. The *Leper*, for Instance, the *Nazarite*, with others of the same antiquated and grotesque Stamp. These are not only mentioned, but their Case is very circumstantially, and with no small Solemnity, described. All which seem, to me at least, so many pompous, but *unmeaning* Narratives; that convey no manner of Edification to Readers in the present Age.—I have frequently had an Inclination, and now I have a proper Opportunity, to ask your Opinion upon these Points.

Assp. I am obliged to You, *Theron*, for giving me the Hint. What You propose, is by no Means foreign to the Topic of our Discourse.—Those Persons were truly remarkable; neither are the Peculiarities

* *Cantic.* ii. 9. The Word, in the first Edition, is *flourishing* through. It was taken from the *Hebrew*, without consulting the *English Bible*, and is a literal Translation of פָּרַח. Which signifies more than barely *showing Himself*; shewing Himself with Lustre and Beauty. Like a delicate Flower, in its most blooming State, and all its glossy Colours.—Yet *flourishing through Lattices*; manifesting Himself, not completely, but in part; concealing some, while He reveals much, of his mediatorial Glory.

liarities of their Case recorded in vain. They picture out, in *dismal* and *delightful* Colours, the Sinner and the SAVIOUR.—To know Ourselves, and to know *CHRIST*, is true Wisdom; is indeed the Consummation of all Knowledge. Here, We have a Lecture of hieroglyphical Instruction, on both those important Subjects.

The *Leper* * was an Emblem of a *Sinner*.—His Disease extremely afflictive to Himself, and intolerably loathsome to others. Sin likewise is the *forest* of all Miseries, to the Wretch who commits it; and most *detestably* odious, to the GOD who forbids it.—The *Leper* was secluded from the *Benefits* of *Society*, and all Communication with his Fellow-citizens. The Sinner also, while impenitent and unpardoned, is an *Alien* from the Commonwealth of *Israel* †; without any Enjoyment of the Comforts, or any Interest in the Privileges of the Gospel. If He dies in this Condition, He must be forever *shut out* from the Kingdom of Heaven; for ever *cut off* from the Presence of the LORD.

The Contagion was sometimes so *pestilent*; that it not only tainted the Clothes of the Diseased, but spread itself over the Walls of his House, and infected the Timber of the Beams. It was sometimes so *inveterate*; that there was no other possible Way of eradicating it, but only by burning the Garment, and demolishing the Building. Does not this give Us a clear, but melancholy View, of *original* Corruption? Which has transfused its Poison, through all the Faculties of the Soul, and all the Members of the Body. Nor will ever be intirely

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* See Lev. Chap. xiii, xiv.

† Eph. ii. 12.

tirely expelled, till Death releases the former, and consigns the latter to the Dust.

What could cure this terrible Distemper, even in its *mildest* State? Not all the Balm of *Gilead*; not all the Drugs on a thousand Hills; nothing but the *consecrated* Oil and *sacrificial* Blood, duly applied by the High-Priest. And what can heal the Disorders of our fallen Souls? So far heal them, as to purge away their Guilt, and subdue the Prevalence of their Iniquities? No Acts of Mortification, no Vigilance, nor any Efforts of our own; nothing but the *atoning* Death, and *sanctifying* SPIRIT of the blessed *JESUS*. The Malignity and Virulence of this Plague of the Heart, are absolutely incorrigible by any other Remedy. But, blessed be divine Grace, *this* Remedy, provided by our great HIGH-PRIEST, and administered by our great PHYSICIAN, is sovereign, is infallible.

The Case of the *Nazarites* * was the very reverse of the State of the *Lepers*. *Her Nazarites*, Jeremiah says, *were purer than Snow, they were whiter than Milk; they were more ruddy in Body than Rubies, their Polishing was of Sapphires* †. A faint Representation of the only begotten SON, who is *the fairest among ten thousand*; the Brightness of his FATHER's Glory, and the express Image of his Person; both GOD and Man in one sacred, wonderful, adorable SAVIOUR.—*They*, during the Time of their Separation, abstained from Wine; withdrew from secular Business; avoided every Kind of Pollution; and dedicated themselves, in an especial Manner, to the Service of GOD. A Type of that glorious NAZARITE, who was separated,

for

* See Numb. Chap. vi.

† Lam. iv. 7.

for a Season, from the Fruitions of Heaven: who was holy, harmless, and undefiled, both in his Nature and all his Conversation: who sanctified Himself, and devoted his Life and Labours, his Soul and Body, to the Glory of his FATHER, and the Redemption of his People.—The *Nazarenes*, even when they had discharged their Vow, and were ceremonially clean, yet were obliged to offer a Sin-offering, a Burnt-offering, and a Peace-offering. So, the great REDEEMER, though He had *perfectly obeyed* all the preceptive Parts of the divine Law, yet was required to offer up a Sacrifice—even the *incomparably precious* Sacrifice of Himself—in order to consummate the Work of our Salvation.

Ther. Have You a sufficient Warrant, for this Strain of Interpretation? Is it *sound*, is it *rational*, or conformable to any *authentic* Standard of scriptural Exposition? Methinks, it looks more like the Child of Fancy, than the Offspring of Judgment; more like the Sally of a sportive Imagination, than the Result of a sober Disquisition.

You cannot be ignorant, *Aspasio*, how the ruling Passion tinctures the whole Conduct. Hence it is, I apprehend, that your *religious Inamcratoes* find heavenly Beauties, where Scripture intended no more than natural Truths. Hence it is, that they turn plain Facts into profound Figures, and allegorize common Sense into pious Absurdity.—Have You never seen the *mystic* Interpretations of some antient, and I may add, some modern Divines? The Honesty of their Design is transparent, and the Piety of their Hearts is unquestionable; otherwise, We should be

tempted to suspect, that they meant to burlesque the Scriptures, and disgrace their Author.

Who can ever persuade Himself, that the supremely wise GOD, would send Us to search for a *Body of Divinity*, in a *Bundle of Reeds*? Or set Us to spin all the Mysteries of Christianity, from a few Fleeces of Wool, *ring-streaked, speckled, and spotted* *? Thus to expound the Scriptures, is, not to open them clearly, and apply them judiciously, but rather to whip them into Froth †.

Asp. We have the Authority of our LORD Himself. Who has informed Us—That the *brazen Serpent* lifted up in the Wilderness ‡, was figurative of his own Suspension and Death on the Cross.—That the *Temple*, built on Mount *Sion*, was typical of his immaculate Body, in which dwelt all the Fulness of the GODHEAD ¶.—That the Prophet *Jonah*, lodged in the Belly of the Whale, and discharged from that strange Confinement, on the third Day §; was an Emblem of his own descending into the Grave, and rising again before his Flesh saw Corruption.

We have also the Testimony and the Practice of the chiefest of the Apostles, for our Warrant. Speaking of *Hagar* and *Sarah*, He expressly says; *Which Things are an Allegory*. A figurative Transaction; where one Thing is done, another designed; or the apparent History, comprehends a latent Mystery.—He assures Us, That the *Rock* smitten by *Moses*,

* Gen. xxx. 39.

† *Luther* used to call such far-fetched and unnatural Allegories, *Spumam Scripturæ*.

‡ John iii. 14.

¶ John ii. 19, 21. Col. ii. 9.

§ Matt. xii. 39, 40.

Moses, had a Reference to *CHRIST**; who was wounded for our Sins, and is the Foundation of our Hopes. That the *Waters*, issuing at the Stroke, were significative of those spiritual Blessings, which flow from a crucified SAVIOUR. That, as the former followed the Sons of *Jacob*, through all the Circumvolutions of their tedious Journey; the latter accompany the Disciples of *JESUS*, in every Stage of their earthly Pilgrimage.—Let the great Teacher of the *Gentiles* be our Expositor; and We shall see the *Veil* of the *Temple* dignified with a Significancy, richer far than its costly Materials, and curious Workmanship. Its Silk and Embroidery exhibit, to the Eye of Faith, the pure and spotless Flesh of *CHRIST*†. As, by rending the material Veil, the Holy of Holies became visible and accessible; so, by piercing the Body, and spilling the Blood of *CHRIST*, the GOD of Heaven was manifested in all his Goodness, and the Kingdom of Heaven was opened to all Believers.

Every Reader must admire those *divided Waves*; which, instead of overwhelming the *Israelites* with a resistless Deluge, stood like a Wall of Defence on their Right-hand, and on their left, as they marched through the Depths of the Sea.—Every Reader must admire that *suspended Cloud*, which spread itself like a spacious Canopy over the Hosts of *Israel*; and screened them from the annoying Sun-beams, as they passed through the sultry Desert †.—Our

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Admi-

* 1 Cor. x. 4.

† Heb. x. 20.

† It is said, That the *Israelites*, passing through the Deserts of *Arabia*, saw not a green Tree, nor a shady Spot, for many Months. If so, this miraculous Cloud, this grand Umbrella, must be unspeakably serviceable and refreshing.

Admiration must be heightened, when We find *that*, which was a Cloud by Day, becoming a *Pillar of Fire* by Night; and illuminating their Camp with the most amazing, as well as the most cheering Splendor.—But St. Paul discerned a greater Glory, and a deeper Design, in these unparalleled Events. The People, He says, *were baptized unto Moses, in the Cloud and in the Sea* *. These symbolically represented, The Baptism of Water and of Fire; or the Application of *CHRIST's* Blood to our Souls, and the Efficacy of his *SPIRIT* on our Hearts. In the former of which, consists our Justification; from the latter of which, proceeds our Sanctification.

I fear, You would think my Discourse, somewhat like the Journey just now mentioned, if I was to touch upon the Ordinances of the *civil* Constitution. The Ox not to be muzzled, in treading out the Corn †; was a virtual Provision for the Maintenance of Ministers, who “labour in the “Word and Doctrine.” The Fields not to be sowed with divers Kinds of Seed; Linnen and Woollen not to be intermingled in the same Manufacture ‡; seem to prohibit all dissimilar and unnatural Combinations. Especially of a Believer and Infidel, in the Bond of Marriage; or of human Righteousness and divine, in the Case of Justification. These Particulars, with others of the same Nature, I pass over. But I must not wholly omit the Epistle to the *Hebrews*. Which is the most unexceptionable Vindication, as well as the faultless Model, of allegorical Exposition.

It

* 1 Cor. x. 2. † Deut. xxv. 4. ‡ 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10.
 † Levit. xix. 19.

It is delightful to observe, what Propriety of Address, the inspired Writer uses. He speaks to the *Jews*, in *their own Way*: alludes to their own Usages, Ordinances, and Ceremonies: proves them to be Types of, and Guides to, a more clear, a more benign, and in all respects a more excellent * Oeconomy. More particularly He displays the *transcendent Superiority* of *CHRIST* and his Gifts, even to those Persons and Privileges, which they held in the highest Esteem. These, like the Morning Star, were introductory to, yet totally eclipsed by, the rising Sun.

They had exalted Apprehensions of the *Angelic Excellencies*. The Apostle therefore celebrates the REDEEMER, as the LORD whom Angels obey, as the GOD whom Angels adore.—They always reckoned *Moses* to be the *first Favourite* of Heaven, and chief among the Children of Men. He lets them know, that *Moses*, with all his extraordinary Endowments, was but a *Servant* in the House

* He styles the legal Oblations, and indeed the whole Service of the *Jewish Sanctuary*, *The Example and Shadow of heavenly Things*; or of *CHRIST JESUS*, and evangelical Worship, and spiritual Blessings, *Heb. viii. 5.*—*Ἰνδυσμα, the Pattern*: somewhat like the Strokes, penciled out upon a Piece of fine Linen; which present You with the Figure of Sprigs, of Leaves, and of Flowers; but have not yet received their splendid Colours, their curious Shades, and beautiful Enrichments, from the Labours of the Needle.—*Σκιά, A shadowy Representation*: which gives You some dim and imperfect Idea of the Body; but not the fine Features, not the distinguishing Air, none of those living Graces, which adorn the real Person.—Yet, both the Pattern and the Shadow lead our Minds to something nobler than themselves. The Pattern, to that which *completes* it; the Shadow, to that which *occasions* it.

House of *JESUS*. It was his greatest Honour, to minister unto this Prince of Peace.—As the Priesthood and Sacrifices were some of their distinguishing Privileges; He shews the Pre-eminence of *CHRIST*'s Office to all the *Aaronic* Orders. He demonstrates the extensive and everlasting Efficacy of his one Atonement; in Preference to every Form, and the whole temporary Series of *Levitical* Oblations.

Ther. Thus interpreted, I must acknowledge, the Book of *Levitical* Ceremonies is *significant* and *edifying*. Whereas, abstracted from this evangelical Improvement, nothing can be more empty and jejune. I once thought, that, to peruse those obsolete Canons, was like sitting down to an Entertainment of dry Bones. But, if such be their Import, they may yield Marrow and Fatness to the attentive Mind.

Due Care, however, should be taken, not to suppose a Type, where there is no *apparent* Foundation of Analogy in the Thing itself; or no *Hint* of this Nature given Us by the unerring *SPIRIT*. Lest, instead of being guided by Truth, We are bewildered by Fancy.—And, when either or both these Handles present themselves, I think, We should beware of straining the Subject, beyond the Bounds of a *just* and *reasonable* Comparison. Lest, instead of following the Clue, We stretch it till it breaks.—If the first Caution is not observed, the Sense of Scripture will lie so deep, or be removed to such a Distance; that none but Persons of the most acute Discernment, can find it; or none but Persons of the most excursive Imagination, can reach it. If the second is not regarded, the Meaning of those divine Vo-

lumes will become so vague and volatile, that there will hardly remain any Possibility of ascertaining or fixing it.

Asp. As to the Expedience and Necessity of these cautionary Limitations *, I have the Pleasure of agreeing entirely with my Friend.—Let our Fancy submit to the Reins of Judgment, otherwise her Excursions will be *wild* and *lawless*. Let our Zeal borrow the Eyes of Discretion, otherwise her Efforts will be *blind* and *extravagant*. And let all, thus tempered, thus regulated, be under the Influence of enlightening Grace. *Then*, to spiritualize the antient Scriptures, will be to convert the Stones of the Sanctuary into the Jewels of a Crown; and to fetch, not Water only, but Milk and Honey, from the flinty Rock.

Then, how pleasing must it be, as well as instructive, to discover the blessed *JESUS*, in all the Institutions of the *Mosaic Law* †.—To see his Incarnation prefigured by the Feast of *Tabernacles* ‡. When the *Israelites* were to relinquish their Houses,

* The Cautions, necessary to be used on this Occasion, are more copiously and very particularly laid down, by *Witsius* in his *Miscellanea*, pag. 673, &c. Concerning which Rules, our elegant and judicious Author observes; *Hæ sunt allegoricarum & typicarum Interpretationum Leges. Quibus spectis neglectisque, si quis Ingenio suo indulgeat, ipseque sibi mysticos Sensus excogitet, ut ea quæ sunt מציאות locutiones planæ, in מידות ænigmata transformet; is non Sensum Dei, sed Cerebri sui obtundit Figmenta; et, ut Hieronymus ait, In Scripturis lymphatico errore versatur.*

† Agreeably to the just and beautiful Observation of *Theodoret*; *Ὁρα οὖν ὅπως ἀντιπροσέστη, τὰντα οὐ Χρῆςτος τὰντοις ἐξορμασμένοι.* What the Law sketched out in a shadowy Draught, *CHRIST* exhibited in real Life and Substance.

‡ Lev. xxlii. 34, 40, 42.

and lodge in Booths. Even as the SON of GOD left the Bosom of his FATHER, and the Seats of Bliss, to inhabit a Cottage of Clay, and sojourn in a Vale of Tears.—To see our spotless and Divine VICTIM, typically slain at the joyful Solemnity of the *Passover*, and the anniversary Fast of *Expiation*.—To see his Death, that inestimable Ransom for our Souls, presented to our Faith, in every Morning and Evening *Sacrifice* *: his Intercession, that prevailing Recommendation of our Prayers, most sweetly expressed by the rich *Incense*, which attended the sacred Rite.—To see the various Methods of *Purification*; some pointing at the Fountain † for Sin and for Uncleanness, opened in our REDEEMER's bleeding Heart; others referring to those sanctifying Operations of the SPIRIT, which act as a *Refiner's Fire* ‡, or as *Fullers Sope*.—To see, in the *City of Refuge* §, that inviolable Sanctuary, that most perfect Security, which CHRIST's meritorious Sufferings, yield to the believing, and tender to every Sinner.

Was it so very affecting, and so very encouraging to *Aeneas*, when He beheld the Story of the *Trojan* Heroes, pictured upon the Walls of the *Carthaginian* Temple §? How much greater Encouragement and Joy

* Exod. xxix. 38, 39. † Exod. xxix. 4. Numb. xix. 18. Psal. li. 7. ‡ Numb. xxxi. 23. Isai. iv. 4. § Numb. xxxv. 11, 12.

§ VIRG. *Æn.* l. 454, &c. *Aeneas*, shipwrecked upon a Coast unknown, goes abroad, accompanied with a single Friend, in order to make Discoveries. To learn the Name of the Country, the Nature of the Inhabitants, and what Treatment Himself and his Companions were likely to find. Wandering in this Manner, He enters a stately Temple, adorned with historical Paintings.

Joy must arise in the Christian's Breast, when He perceives the amiable Lineaments of his Everlasting FRIEND, pourtrayed in all the Peculiarities of the *Jewish* Worship, and in the most distinguishing Events of the *Jewish* History! This must highly ennoble the Bible, and inexpressibly endear it to our Affections. This spreads *Lustre, Life, and Glory*, through every Page of that blessed Book.— Though I would beware of indulging, what might be called a pious Wantonness of Imagination; yet I should much rather choose, in expounding the Scriptures, to ramble a little with *Augustine*, among the Groves, the Fountains, and the Flowers of the Gospel; than to stumble with *Grotius* *, amidst the dark and barren Desarts of unevangelical Criticism. I would see, or think I see my SAVIOUR, where it may not, perhaps, be easy to make out the Traces of his Dignity, to the Satisfaction of a rigorous Enquirer; rather than shut my Eyes upon the Display of his Perfections, when they beam forth with the most inviting Beauty.

Ther.

And what are the Subjects of these fine Decorations? To his great Surprise, and equal Satisfaction, He finds them to be the *Trojan* War, and the Exploits of his Countrymen. This Incident affects Him extremely. Dispels his Fears; animates his Hopes; and turns his Despondency into Confidence.

* *Grotius*, it is too well known, could not, or would not see the Person and the Sufferings of *CHRIST*, even in the liiid Chapter of *Isaiah*. No, not in that Chapter, where the *Earl of Rochester* saw such a bright and endearing Manifestation of the REDEEMER's Grace, as laid the Foundation for his extraordinary Conversion. Strange! that a learned and renowned Expositor, should have less spiritual Discernment, should be abundantly more dim-sighted, (*μωρανισμὸς*) than a dissolute and infamous Libertine.

Ther. How soon is our Walk finished! How imperceptibly has the Time stole away!—These *Garden-Gates* I always used to approach with a particular Complacency. They seemed to afford me a *welcome Retreat* from the Impertinence and Vanity of the World. Now, methinks, I enter them with Reluctance. Because, they are likely to put a Period to this agreeable Conversation.—However, as my *Aspasio* enters with me, I am reconciled, I am satisfied. It will be in his Power to restore the Pleasure, which must now be interrupted. And this is what I shall ere long request; because, I have not spoke my whole Mind upon the present Subject.

Asp. Whenever You think proper, *Theron*. This is, to me, a *favourite Subject*: and not to me only, but to incomparably better Judges.—The Man, who had been caught up into the third Heavens, and seen the Visions of GOD, determined to know *nothing* but *JESUS CHRIST* and Him *crucified* *.—At the grandest Assembly, that ever was convened on Earth, this furnished the *principal*, if not the *only* Topic of Conversation.—And in that World, where the Voice of Joy and Thanksgiving is perpetually heard, this constitutes the *Burden* of the Song; *Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed Us to GOD by thy Blood* †.

* 1 Cor. ii. 2.

† Rev. v. 9.



DIALOGUE IV.

THERON.

IMUST now desire my *Aspasia* to inform me—Of *whom* that grand Assembly consisted, (which He mentioned in the Close of our last Discourse) and *where* it was convened?

Asp. Can't you guess, *Theron*?—Was it in the Plains of *Thessaly*; when *Xerxes* drew together the Forces of more than half the known World, and appeared at the Head of all the Potentates of the East?—Was it in the *Roman Forum*; when the Senators were assembled in their Robes, and the Barbarians took them for a Synod of Gods?—No; it was on the Mount of *Transfiguration*. Where the SON of the true GOD, the LORD of eternal Glory, shone forth in some of his celestial and native Splendour; with Garments white as the new-fallen Snows*, and a Countenance bright as the

* *Mark ix. 3.* The Evangelist's Description is, like the Scene, *remarkably bright*; and the Gradation of his Images, is almost as worthy of Observation, as the memorable Fact.—The Garments were *white*—*exceeding white*

the meridian Sun. Where He conversed with two of his most distinguished Saints, just come down from the Regions of Bliss and Immortality: with *Moses* the meek Deliverer of the Law, and with *Elijah* the resolute Restorer of its Honours. Where He was attended by three of his principal Ambassadors, who were to be the Reformers of Mankind, and the Lights of the World.

This, I think, is the most venerable and august Assembly, which the Annals of History have recorded.—And what was the Topic of Conversation, among these illustrious Personages?—Not the Affairs of State, nor the Revolutions of Empire; not the curious Refinements of Literature, nor the wonderful Discoveries of Philosophy; but the ignominious and bloody Exit *, which the Divine *YESUS* was soon to make at *Jerusalem*.—This Circumstance, methinks, should recommend the Subject to our frequent Discourse; even though it was less eminent, for intrinsic Dignity, and comfortable Import.

Talking in this manner, they arrive at the *Park*. Which, the Moment You enter, fills the View with its

white—white as the Snow—whiter than any Fuller on Earth could make them—surpassing all the Works of Art, equaling the first and finest Productions of Nature.—Nay, so great was the Lustre, so sweetly yet so strongly resplendent, that it glistered (think *callosa*) like the Lightning, and even dazzled the Sight.

Does not this very delicately, yet very forcibly intimate, That the Sufferings and Death of *CHRIST* were the principal End of the *Mosaic* Institutions, and the principal Subject of the *Prophetic* Teachings? For is it not natural to suppose, that *Moses* and *Elijah* intended, when ministering on Earth, that very Thing, which their Conversation dwelt upon, when they descended from Heaven?

its bold, enlarged, and magnificent Sweep.—It was diversified with level and rising Ground. Here, scooped into mimic Amphitheatres; with the *Deer* pendent on the little Summit, or shooting down the easy Precipice. There, raised into gentle Hillocks; some of which were canopied with a large, spreading, solitary Oak; others were tufted with a Cluster of tapering and verdant Elms. Two or three *Cascades*, gleaming from afar, as they poured along the slanting Rock, or the grassy Slope, gave a pleasing Variation to the Prospect. While they startled the timorous unexperienced Fawns, with their foaming Current, and watery Roar.—*Grandeur* and *Simplicity* seemed to be the Genius of the Place. Every Thing breathed an Air of noble Negligence, and artless Majesty.

In the Center of all, rose a curious, *romantic Mount*.—Its Form was exactly round. Somewhat like a Sugar-loaf, whose Cone is lopt off, a little below the Point.—Not coeval with Nature, but the Work of human Industry. Thrown up, 'tis supposed, in those perilous Times, when *Britain* was alarmed by foreign Invasions, or bled with intestine Wounds.—It was covered, all around, with Elder-shrubs. Whose Ranks, gradually rising, and spreading Shade above Shade, composed a kind of woody Theatre. Through which were struck two or three *spiral Walks*; leading, by a gentle Ascent, and under embowering Verdure, to the Summit.—At proper Intervals, and on every Side of the Hill, were formed little *Arbours*; with Apertures, cut through the Boughs, to admit a Prospect of the Country.—In one or other of these leafy Boxes, You command, at every Hour of the Day, either the enliven-

ing Sun, or the refreshing Shade.—All along the circling Avenues, and all around the beauteous Rests, sprung Daffodils, Primroses, and Violets: which, mingling with Hyacinths and Cowslips, composed many a charming Piece of *natural Mosaic*.

How agreeable, as they climb and wind themselves round the Hill, to reflect on the *happy Change*, which has now taken place!—Where steely Helms gleamed, or brazen Shields clashed, the *Goldfinches* twitter their Loves, and display their painted Plumes. The Dens of Rapine, or the horrid Haunts of Bloodshed, are become the Retreats of calm Contemplation, and friendly Converse.—In yonder lower Spaces, where the armed Troops were wont to patrol; from whence they made Excursions, to ravage the Villages, or terrify the Swains; the *Fallow-deer* trip lightly, or the full-headed Stags stand at bay.

From a small Eminence, but at a considerable Distance, gushed a Couple of Springs. Which, rambling through a Grove, lost one another in the shady Labyrinth. Emerging, at length, from the Gloom, they approached nearer and nearer, and fell into Embraces at the Foot of this Hill. They rolled, in amicable Conjunction, along the pebbly Channel, which incircles its Balls; and added their *sober Melody* to the *sprightly Warbling* of the Birds.—Flowing off in one common Stream, they formed the fine Pieces of Water, which beautified the Park. From thence, they stole into the Meadow, and widened into a *River*. There, enamoured as it were with each other, they glide by wealthy Towns, and sweep through flowery Vales; regardless of the blooming Foys, which deck the one, and of the noisy Crowds, which throng the other.

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So, said *Aspasio*, may *Theron* and his *Salina*, pleasing and pleased with each other, pass through the busy and the amusing Scenes of Life; neither captivated by the one, nor anxious for the other. With such harmonious Agreement, and indissoluble Union, may they pursue the Course, marked out by Providence; their Happiness *increasing*, and their Usefulness *enlarging*, as they draw nearer the Ocean of all Good. Then, parted by a gentle Stroke of Fate, like the Waters of some ample Stream severed by the Piers of an intervening Bridge, may they speedily reunite!—Reunite in consummate Bliss, and never be separated more!

Ther. I thank You, *Aspasio*, for your affectionate Compliment. Nor can I wish You, by way of Return, a greater Recompence, than the continual Exercise of such a *benevolent* Temper. For, to exercise Benevolence, is to enjoy the most refined and exalted Pleasure; such as makes the nearest Approaches to the Felicity of the eternal Mind; who, as the Scripture most beautifully speaks, *has Pleasure in the Prosperity of his Servants*.

But while We are seated on this Mount, our Situation reminds Us of (what You just now mentioned) the grand Conference relating to the Death of *CHRIST*.—An Event, for which you have indeed accounted; but in a Manner, not the most honourable to the divine Attributes.

Asp. I have represented it, as a *Ransom* for our Souls, and a *Sacrifice* for our Sins. If You disapprove my Account, be pleased to favour me with your own.—For what Purpose, according to your Opinion, did that ever-blessed PERSON die?

Ther.

Ther. To confirm the *Truth* of his Doctrine, and leave Us a *Pattern* of the most perfect Resignation.

Ass. And is this all? Shall We thus impoverish the Riches of Grace?—Was this Notion *defensible*, it could never be *desirable*. But it has as little to support it, as it has to recommend it.—For, upon such a Supposition, where is the Difference between the Death of *CHRIST*, and the Death of the Martyrs? They confirmed the Truth of the Gospel. In *their* Sufferings was Obedience and Resignation; the same in Quality, though not in Degree.—Upon such a Supposition, what *Benefit* could the antient Patriarchs receive from the REDEEMER? Since None could be improved by the Example of his Patience, or the Pattern of his Obedience, till they were actually exhibited.—Or how could *CHRIST* be styled, *The LAMB slain from the Foundation of the World**? The Advantages of whose Death, commenced from the very Beginning, as they will be prolonged even to the End of Time.

Not to depend on consequential Arguments, let Us hear the express Declaration of our Divine MASTER Himself: *This is my Blood, which is shed*—for what? To give Credibility to my Gospel, or yield an Example of entire Resignation? Rather ~~for the Remission of Sins~~†. Will any One attempt to make, The Remission of Sins, and the Proposal of a Pattern or the Ratification of a Doctrine, synonymous Terms?—They, who can torture and transmute the genuine Sense of Words, at this extraordinary rate, may metamorphose any Expression into any Meaning.

Rev. xiii. 8. † *Matt.* xxvi. 28.

If then We would consider our LORD's Death, in its *due Amplitude*; We must consider it, both as a Pattern of Piety, and as a Ransom for Sinners. We must neither separate nor confound these very distinct, yet very consistent Effects.

Ther. Is it not inconsistent with the acknowledged Principles of Justice, That the Innocent should be punished, instead of the Offender?

Ans. If the innocent Person has an *absolute* Power over his own Life; *willingly* substitutes Himself in the Place of the Guilty; and, by his vicarious Sufferings, fully answers all the Purposes of a *righteous* Government;—In this Case, which was the Case with our LORD, I see not the least Repugnancy to the Rules of Justice.

The Bible, that authentic Transcript of the Counsels of Heaven, avows; and, by avowing, vindicates the Practice. *The LORD hath laid on Him the Iniquity of Us all* * : when all We like Sheep

* *Isai. liii. 6.* *וְהוּא הִכָּנוּעַ* *made to meet, or fall upon, in an hostile, vindictive Manner; with a Design to take Vengeance, or inflict Death; as an armed Man falls upon his Enemy, or the fierce Lion on the helpless Lamb. This is by far the most usual Signification of the Phrase.*

I could not observe, without Surprise and Sorrow, the late Attempt of a learned Writer, to interpret away the Force and Spirit of this Text. He says, “ the Word We translate *hath laid*, is the same that We render *meet*, “ *Exod. xxiii. 4.* *If Thou meet thine Enemy's Ox or Ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring them back to Him again.* “ And the Meaning is, By Him the LORD hath caused “ *to meet and stop the Iniquities of Us all, wherein We* “ *have wandered from Him.*”

To this I might object; That, though the *Verb*, in each Passage, is the same, the *Construction* is by no means parallel. The Prefix *ו* occurs in one Case, is omitted

Sheep had gone astray, and were exposed to the Stroke of Vengeance, as those wandering Creatures to the ravenous Beast; the good SHEPHERD interposed, and the just GOD made that Vengeance to fall upon Him, which must otherwise have been executed upon Us.—He suffered, says another inspired Writer, *the Just for the Unjust* *;

in the other.—I might farther enquire; Whether the Language of this Interpretation, be conformable to the Laws of Grammar; and such as sufficiently expresses, what I suppose is intended, “The LORD caused our Iniquities to be met, and to be stopped.”—But these Particulars I wave, and shall only examine, whether the Sense is suitable to Scripture. According to this Gentleman’s Idea, the Prophet’s Doctrine is as follows; “Our Sins were running away, like a stray Sheep, or like a wandering Ox. But they were met by CHRIST; who graciously turned them back, and restored them to their rightful Owner.”—To avoid this glaring Impropriety, our Author has added a kind of Salvo; “to turn Us back to Himself, who is the Shepherd of Souls.” But this is to depart from the Prophet’s Subject; who is speaking not of Us, but of our Iniquities. This is to depart from the Tenour of his own Explication: If He adheres to the Clue, which He borrows from the Book of Exodus, what I have represented, is the unavoidable Consequence.

See! to what wretched Shifts, dishonourable to the Word of GOD, and even to the Art of Criticism, They must have recourse! Who refuse to acknowledge, the real Substitution of CHRIST in our Stead, and the proper Atonement made by his Death.—How much more like a true Critic, and like a true Christian, has Vitringa explained the Passage! *Cum Nos instar Ovium dispersarum essemus in Erroribus, & Paena Criminum nostrorum, instar Lupi aut Bestiæ voracis Nos persequeretur ad Exiliū: Intervēit servus JEHOVÆ justus, qui illam Pœnam in se suscepit; in quem irruit ad Necem usque; quiq̃ adeo medius inter Pœnam & Nos, eandem Pœnam tulit, & Nos ab Exilio vindicavit.*

* 1 Pet. iii. 18.

that, by expiating our Guilt, *He might bring Us to GOD*—now, to His gracious Favour—hereafter, to His blissful Presence.

You will permit me to add a Passage, from our common Favourite *Milton*. Because, it is no less beautiful in itself; than it is pertinent to the Occasion; must please the Critic, and may expound the Apostle.—*MESSIAH*, pleading in behalf of fallen Man, thus addresses his Almighty FATHER;

————— *Man, dead in Sins and lost,
Atonement for Himself, or Offering meet
(Indebted and undone!) hath none to bring.
Behold Me then! Me for Him! Life for Life
I offer. On me let thine Anger fall.
Account me Man: I for his Sake will leave
Thy Bosom, and this Glory next to Thee
Freely put off; and for Him lastly die
Well-pleas'd; on me let Death wreak all his Rage.*

Ther. The fine Imagination of a Poet, will hardly pass for a decisive Argument. When We are searching after Truth, We must attend to the Dictates of Reason, not follow the Vagaries of Fancy. And Reason, *Aspasia*, remonstrates against your Notion of a vicarious Sacrifice. Reason! that primary Guide, and final Test, both in discovering and determining the Sense of Scripture.

Asp. Suppose You then, my dear *Theron*, that None are in Possession of Reason, but the Pupils of *Socinus*, and the Zealots for *Deism*? Or, that None

K 4

make

make use of Reason, in their religious Enquiries,
but Men of this Mould?

Wrong not the Christian, think not Reason yours;

'Tis Reason our great MASTER holds so dear;

'Tis Reason's injur'd Rights his Wrath resents;

'Tis Reason's Voice he'd his Glories crown.

Through Reason's Wounds alone thy Faith can die.

Poets, You see, are far from disclaiming Reason. Equally far is Christianity from discarding the sober, the *sanctified* Use of this noble Faculty. When Reason is under the Influence and Direction of the Divine SPIRIT, We have the same high Opinion of her Excellence, as Yourself. And, when thus regulated, We have, I am persuaded, the Sanction of her Authority, for all our Sentiments.

Reason; as She operated in the Sages of the Hea-then World, instead of rejecting, approved and adopted this very Scheme. Approved it, even under the Disadvantage of a mutilated and defective, or rather of a perverted and dead Form. The current Language of the Classic Authors, and almost every Historian of Greece and Rome, are Vouchers for the Truth of this Observation †. As the Gen-tiles were unanimous in the Custom of offering Sa-crifices, and equally unanimous in supposing their vicarious Nature, so also are the Jewish Writers.

Ther. What Man of Sense, pays any Regard to the Jewish Writers? Legendary they are, and ex-travagant to the last Degree. Dotards I might call them, rather than Writers.

* Night-Thoughts, No IV.

† See the Note, in Dialogue III, p. 84, 85.

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They are, I believe, extravagant enough in their Comments upon Scripture. But they relate, with sufficient Exactness and Fidelity, the prevailing Belief of their Nation. In this Case, their Testimony is as unexceptionable; as in the other, their Notions are chimerical. Now, had it been a mistaken Belief, surely our blessed LORD, that infallible Judge, and impartial Reprover, would have testified his Disapprobation of it. Surely his Disciples, who were actuated by the unerring and undaunted Spirit of their MASTER, would have entered their Protest against it. Surely St. Paul, in his Epistle to that very People, and in his Treatise on that very Subject, would have set Himself to rectify such an Error; and have weeded out the Tares, before He sowed the good Seed. But there is not the least Hint of this Kind, in all the Discourses of our SAVIOUR, or in all the Writings of his Apostles.

They speak to a People, who were accustomed to look upon their Sacrifices, as peculiar Oblations*, and a typical Expiation of Guilt. They speak of our REDEEMER's Crucifixion, and the Benefits of his Death, in those sacrificial Terms, which were of current Use, and established Signification. If therefore the popular Opinion was improper, their Manner of Expression and Address, must be calculated rather to authenticate Error, than to propagate Truth. So that, I think, even the Silence of the inspired Penman on this Occasion, is but little inferior to a loud Attestation. Did they only

This, I dare promise the learned Reader, He will find incontestably proved by Outram, in his Treatise De Sacrificiis.

say nothing *against* the Doctrine of Satisfaction by Sacrifice; it would, in effect, and Circumstances considered, be saying Abundance *for* it.—But they are very copious and explicit upon the Point.

Then Where are they so copious? If You have such a Heap of their Allegations, it will be easy to pick out a few, and give Us a Specimen.

Ass. It is as easy, *Theron*, as it is delightful.—*MESSIAH* shall be cut off, says the Prophet *Daniel*, but not for Himself *.—For whom then, and for What? *Isaiah* informs Us concerning both: *For the Transgression of my People was He stricken* †.—Because, this is an Article of the last Importance, it is repeated; it is confirmed; it is explained, with the most remarkable Particularity: *He was wounded for our Transgressions; He was bruised for our Iniquities; the Chastisement of our Peace was upon Him* ‡, and *with his Stripes We are healed* §.—Our LORD himself asserts the same Truth in the very same Style; *I am the good Shepherd, and lay down my Life for the Sheep* §.—*St. Paul*, in a Multitude of Passages, sets his Seal to this momentous Doctrine.—*St. Peter* maintains it, in very forcible Words; *Who*

* Dan. ix. 26.

† Isai. liii. 8.

‡ *The Chastisement of our Peace*, the Punishment necessary to make our Peace with GOD, was upon Him, *viz.* This Form of Expression is used, *Judg. xix. 20. Psal. lvi. 13.* In the former Place, it signifies A voluntary Engagement, to perform a friendly Office. In the latter, it implies the Necessity of performing, what is thus undertaken. Both the Ideas seem to be comprehended in the present Passage. Our LORD willingly engaged to supply our Wants, and pay our Debts. Which, when once undertaken, He lay under an Obligation to execute.

§ Isai. liii. 5.

§ John x. 15.

*Who his own Self bare our Sins, in his own Body on the Tree.**

The sacred Writers not only assert this capital Article, but use every Diversity of Speech, in order to give it the fullest Evidence, and the strongest Establishment. *He made Reconciliation for the Sins of the People †. JESUS CHRIST the Righteous is the Propitiation for our Sins ‡. He loved Us, and washed Us from our Sins in his own Blood §. He was made Sin for Us, though He knew no Sin §.*

Ther. No body makes any Objection to these Texts. But the Sense, the true Sense of such Phrases, is the Thing in question.

Asp. What You call the Question, to me appears so plain, as not to want a Decision, or admit of a Doubt.

However, since You seem to demand a critical Scrutiny, it will not be thought pedantic, if I make an Observation or two upon the original Languages; or rather, as You are not acquainted with the Hebrew, upon that Language, of which You yourself are a Judge and a Master.

If One died for All, then were All dead. The Preposition *υπερ*, in this Connection, must necessarily signify more than, “on our Account, or for our” Advan-

* 1 Pet. ii. 24. Very forcible Words indeed.—*Ος—*
αυτο—εν το σωτηρι αυτου—He bare—Himself bare our Sins—
in his own Body. Intended, One would imagine, to make the Article of our LORD's vicarious Sufferings, clear beyond all Misapprehension, and sure beyond all Doubt.

† Heb. ii. 17. ‡ 1 John ii. 2. § Rev. i. 5.
§ 2 Cor. v. 21.

"Advantage." Because, if it be taken in this unsettled rambling Sense, the Apostle's Argument is vague and inconclusive.—In case our LORD had suffered, only "to free Us from some Evil, and procure Us some Benefit;" this would by no means imply, that *all were dead*; under the Sentence of Condemnation; obnoxious and doomed to Death. The utmost, You can infer from such Premises, is; That All stood in Need of a Deliverance from some Evil, or wanted the Procurement of some Good. Whereas, suppose the sacred Writer to intend, that our LORD's Death was truly vicarious, and undergone in our Stead; that He suffered, what was *our Due*, and *our Doom*; then, the Reasoning is just, and the Inference undeniable.

He gave Himself, *ανταλutron υπερ* †, *A Ransom for All*. If this does not imply the Notion of vicarious, I very much question, whether Language itself can express it.—*Αυτρον*, is a *Ransom*; which conveys a vicarious Sense, in its most common and authorized Accept.

2 Cor. v. 14. Should any choose to translate the Words, *Εν τω υπερω παντων απθανεν, απο ος παντες απθανεν*, *If One died for All, then All have died*; I have no Objection to make. Here the Idea of vicarious Suffering, or vicarious Payment, presents itself with great Transparency. As though the Apostle had said; "If One hath suffered; or been punished for All; then All, in Effect, have suffered; or been punished. Or, to take in the Notion of Debt, If One hath made full Payment for twenty insolvent Debtors, then all the twenty have, according to the acknowledged Rules of Law and Equity, made the full Payment."

† 1 Tim. ii. 6. *Christus seipsum*

added to all, renders the Expression as determinate and emphatical as possible. Emphatical to declare the vicarious Nature of our LORD's Death. That it was really endured in our Stead; and thus made Satisfaction for our Sins; thus ransomed Us from Death eternal.

Shall I argue from a more obvious Topic; which has no such Dependence, on the precise Significancy of the Original?—Surely, says the Prophet. He speaks with Vehemence, as of an Affair which is very weighty. He speaks with Confidence, as of a Fact which is very certain. *He hath borne our Griefs, and carried our Sorrows* *. What can this mean, but He hath taken upon Himself that Affliction, and those Miseries, which properly belonged to Us?—Let us read on, and this Meaning will present itself, in the clearest View. *We did esteem Him stricken, smitten of GOD, and afflicted: We took Him for a real Malefactor, and thought that He was punished for his own Misconduct.*—In opposition to which injurious and false Surmise, it is added; *But He was wounded for our Transgressions, He was bruised for our Iniquities.* True it is, that He was wounded, not only by Transgressors, but for or on Account of Transgressions. Yet not any committed by Himself, but those committed by Us. May I not here borrow the Prophet's Language, and say with an Air of Certainty? Surely, this is the plainest Proof in the World, that our Sins were the meritorious Cause of CHRIST's Sufferings.

And
Epistol.

* Isai. liii. 4.

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And if our Sins were the meritorious Cause of his Sufferings, then they must be charged upon Him, and punished in Him.

St. Paul affirms, That **CHRIST** has delivered Us from the Curse of the Law *. How! By taking our Place, and enduring what We deserved. Or, as the Apostle Himself speaks, to the same Effect, but in a much more expressive Manner, by being made a Curse for Us. Does not this evidently denote both a Commutation of Persons, and a Translation of Punishment? He suffered, who was innocent; not We, who are guilty. He also suffered that very Sentence, which the Law denounced on Us. For, it is written, *Cursed is every One that continueth not in all Things †*; to this We were obnoxious. It is written again, *Cursed is every One that hangeth on a Tree ‡*; to this **CHRIST** submitted. Now if **CHRIST** endured that very Curse, which We deserved: if, by this Means, He delivered Us from all Malediction: either this must be suffering in our Stead ‖, or else Nothing can be called by that Name.

Shall

* Gal. iii. 13. † Deut. xxvii. 26. ‡ Gal. iii. 13.
 || " This (says Dr. South, in his smart Manner) is spoke so plain and loud by the universal Voica of the whole Book of GOD, that Scripture must be crucified as well as **CHRIST**, to give any other tolerable Sense of the Expressions."—And not Scripture only, but the common Import of Language. What says *Mercutio*? When his Son, interposing in his Behalf, is slain by *Aneas*.

— Pro me hostili paterer succedere Dextrae

Quem genui? Tuam hac Genitor per Vulsura feror?

Moris tua curvatus?

Hæc,

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Shall I descend lower still, and refer our Point to the Determination of *illiterate Men*?—Ask any of your serious Tenants, What Ideas arise in their Minds, upon the Perusal of the aforementioned Texts?—I dare venture to foretel, that, artless and unimproved as their Understandings are, they will not hesitate for an Answer. They will neither complain of Obscurity, nor ask the Assistance of Learning. But will *immediately* discern, in all these Passages, a gracious REDEEMER suffering in their Stead; and, by his bitter, but expiatory Passion, procuring the Pardon of their Sins.—Nay farther, as they are not accustomed to the Finesses of Criticism, I apprehend, they will be at a loss to conceive, how it is possible to understand such Passages, in *any other* Sense.

Say not, this is an improper Appeal; or these are incompetent Judges. The Scriptures were written for *their* Edification; not to exercise the Ingenuity of subtle Disputants, but to instruct the meanest of Mankind in the Way of Salvation. Therefore, on

funda-

Here, the Father is *saved* by his Son's Wounds; *lives* by his Son's Death. How, and in what Manner? By a Substitution of One instead of the Other; by the Son's *sufferings*, what must otherwise have *fallen* upon the Father.—Should the *Socinian* Interpreters try the same Experiment on these Lines of *Virgil*, which they make upon Passages of a parallel Signification in Scripture; is there a Critic in the whole World, that *could* approve, that *could* endure, such flagrant Violations of Grammar, Sense, and Taste?—Yet I believe, there is no sincere Christian, but would readily and gratefully say;

*Pro me ultroci succedere Dextra
Dignasti. Tua CHRISTE DEUS per Vulnera serpsit
Morte tua vivens.*

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fundamental Articles, We may assuredly conclude, The Expression will be easy, and the Doctrine perspicuous: so that *He who runs may read, and the way-faring Men, though Fools* *, shall not err therein. And, though I am far from under-valuing the Aids of Literature, yet, upon these momentous Subjects, which are inseparably connected with our eternal Felicity, I cannot but regard the *common Sense* of plain, honest, humble Christians, as the very best of Critics.

Ther. It has been said by a *learned Critic*, That vicarious Punishment or Suffering, gives us too low Ideas of the SON of GOD, as it sinks them to the Pain and Suffering of a Malefactor, the very meanest Idea We can have of them.

Asp. Be the Idea ever so mean, it is plainly suggested by the Word of Prophecy; and fully supported, by the Attestation of sacred History. In *that* it was foretold, and in *this* it is recorded, That *He was numbered with Transgressors* †.—And not only by his Accusers, who called him a Glutton, a Drunkard, a Seducer of the People. Not only by his Executioners, who led him forth to die with Malefactors, and crucified Him between two Thieves. But by his Almighty FATHER also. By Him *CHRIST was made Sin* ‡: by Him the

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* *Isai. xxxv. 8.* The Word *Fools*, seems to denote Persons of *slow Understanding*, and *dull Apprehension*; as *Luke xxiv. 25*. Or else it signifies Those, who, for want of a cultivated Education and the Improvements of Literature, are accounted Fools by the Sons of Science; as *1 Cor. i. 27*.

† *Isai. liii. 12.* *Luke xxii. 37.*

‡ *2 Cor. v. 21.*

only begotten SON was treated as a Transgressor: by *his* Hand and *his* Counsel * delivered He was, to endure the Vengeance due to the vilest Miscreants.

Yes, my dear *Theron*; that glorious PERSON whom the highest Angel adores, “suffered, as if He “had been the Criminal, the Pain and Punishment, “which We, or equivalent to that which We, the “real Criminals, should have suffered!”—If, to consider this, gives Us a low Idea; if, to suffer this, was a deep Abasement; how exceedingly *high*, and how immensely *grand*, is the Goodness and the Grace manifested therein! The lower You draw the Arrow on the String, the loftier Flight it makes in the Sky. And the greater our LORD’s Humiliation for Us, the more wonderful and adorable his Love to Us.

Ther. As there cannot be a vicarious Guilt, or as no One can be guilty in the Stead of Another, so there cannot be a vicarious Punishment, or no One can be punished instead of Another. Because Punishment, in its very Nature, connotes Guilt in the Person who bears it.

Asp. If You mean by Guilt, the Consciousness of having committed a Sin, and the internal Defilement consequent upon it, We never suppose *such* a vicarious Guilt. It is not so much as intimated, that *CHRIST* was stung with the Remorse, or stained with the Pollution, of the adulterous *David*, the perfidious *Peter*, and the persecuting *Saul*. But that He was treated by the righteous GOD, *as if* He had perpetrated these, and all the Crimes of all Believers, either in the past or succeeding Ages.

If

If by Guilt You mean (what, I think, is the true Meaning of the Word) The *Charge* of a criminal Action, and The *Obligation* to suffer Penalty, your Assertion is nothing more than begging the Question. It nakedly affirms the very Thing in Debate. And bare Affirmations, unsupported by Evidence, are seldom admitted as decisive Proofs.—We, on the other Hand, are inclined to believe, That all our criminal Actions were charged upon *CHRIST*; and that He suffered the Punishment, which they deserved. The former of these, is not so properly called vicarious, as *real Guilt*; resulting from Sins, committed by One, imputed to Another. The latter We readily allow to be *vicarious Punishment*, sustained in their Stead, whose Sins were imputed.—For both these Points, We have the Authority of Truth itself, speaking in the Scriptures. *The LORD laid on Him the Iniquities of Us all*; here is the Imputation. *CHRIST has redeemed Us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for Us*; here is the vicarious Punishment. And You know, to what Casuists We submit the Interpretation of these Texts—common Sense, and an honest Heart.

Ther. Is not this *shocking* to suppose? *horrid* to affirm? If Sin was really imputed to *CHRIST*, and Guilt is the Result of such Imputation, then Punishment was his Due—Justice might insist upon it—And He could not escape it.

Asp. To suppose this, is so far from shocking my Apprehension, that it appears, even on your own Principles, right and necessary.—*Right*, because Punishment, as You yourself have declared, always connotes Guilt; I would add, arising either from

Crimes committed, or from Crimes imputed. Indeed, the Sufferings of *CHRIST* could not be of a *penal* Nature, unless He endured them as under a Charge of Sin, and in a State of Guilt.—It is necessary to suppose this, otherwise how will You vindicate the Justice of GOD? He bid his Sword awake, and smite * the blessed *JESUS*. But shall the JUDGE of all the Earth do wrong? Shall He smite, where there is nothing but Innocence? No Sin, either personal or imputed? That be far from Him! The Thought be far from Us!

Whereas, upon this Supposition, it becomes a just and righteous Thing, That GOD should inflict the most rigorous Punishment; or, as the Apostle speaks, should condemn and punish Sin in the *Flesh* † of his SON.—I do not know, but this might be the Cause of our LORD's Silence, when He was accused at *Pilate's* Bar, and at *Herod's* Judgment-seat. It is probable, He considered Himself as standing before a higher Tribunal; and responsible to eternal Justice, for the Crimes of all his People. In this Situation, and in this Capacity, clear Himself of *personal* Demerit He could; clear Himself of *imputed* Iniquity He could not. Therefore He was dumb; like a convicted and guilty Person, He opened not his Mouth. For though, as the SON of the most high GOD, Glory and Immortality were his undoubted Right; yet, as SURETY for sinful Men, Tribulation and Death were his condign Portion.

And why should this be thought shocking? It is not the least Derogation to the transcendent Excellency of *CHRIST*. It casts not the least Stain

* Zech. xiii. 7.

† Rom. viii. 3.

on the unspotted Sanctity, either of his Nature, or his Life.—To bear Sin, as a voluntary Surety, is infinitely different from committing it, as an actual Transgressor. To say, that *CHRIST* was punished for any Misconduct of *his own*, would be false, impious, and horrid. To say, that He was charged with *our* sinful Omissions and Commissions; that He endured the Punishment due—in the plain and full Sense of the Word *due*—to them all; is so far from being injurious to his Dignity, that it pays the proper Honour to his *mediatorial* Undertaking. It pays Him the Honour of—the highest Obedience to his *FATHER's* Will—the deepest Humiliation of his own illustrious Person—and the most boundless Benevolence to Mankind.

Ther. GOD is Love, *Aspasio*, all Love. Whereas You would —

Asp. — not often interrupt a Friend's Discourse. But I cannot forbear interposing a Query, on this Occasion.—Is there, then, no just Displeasure in the DEITY? What meaneth that solemn Denunciation of the Supreme LAWGIVER? *The Anger of the LORD shall smoke against such a Man* *. —What meaneth that awful Declaration of the Apostle? *The Wrath of GOD is revealed from Heaven, upon all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men* †. —Or, in what Sense are We to explain that alarming Interrogatory of the Prophet? *Who can stand before his Indignation* ‡? —Whence could those avenging Visitations proceed, which destroyed *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* with a Tempest of Fire ||?

L 3 Which

* Deut. xxix. 20. † Rom. i. 18. ‡ Nah. i. 6.
|| Gen. xix. 24.

Which swept away so many Thousands of the polluted *Israelites* with a raging Pestilence *? And consigned over so many Millions † of rebellious *Angels* to Chains of Darkness?

Surely, *Theron*, if there be any determinate Signification in Language; if any Lesson to be learnt from the most tremendous Judgments; it is, That the LORD, though free from all the Discomposure of Passion, is nevertheless *angry with the Wicked* †; and will make impenitent Offenders feel the Effects of his holy Indignation.

Ther. Does not your Doctrine represent the All-merciful GOD, as a *rigorous* Being? Who, when once displeased, will hardly be pacified? Whereas, the LORD himself declares by his Prophet; *Fury is not in me*.—Men of satyrical Wit would be apt to insinuate, That You had mistaken JEHOVAH for *Moloch*; and was erecting a Christian Church in the Valley of the Son of *Hinnom*.

Asp. We take our Representations of GOD, not from the vain Conjectures of Men, but from the

* Numb. xxv. 9.

† *Millions*—The *Number* of the fallen Angels is nowhere specified; and the Veil sits deep upon the spiritual World; so that We can see no farther, than Revelation has discovered. Yet, I think, there is sufficient Room to ground a Conjecture, upon the Reply which one of those execrable Apostates made to our LORD. *My Name is Legion*; (a Word signifying a great Multitude, five or six thousand) *for We are many*. If so many were employed in tempting and tormenting a single Person, what Armies, what Myriads of those invisible Enemies, must exist through universal Nature!—It is an alarming Thought; should make Us fly to our Divine PROTECTOR, and Almighty DELIVERER. See Mark v. 9. and 2 Pet. ii. 4.

† Psal. vii. 11. Deut. ix. 8.

the Records of infallible Truth. There he is described, as a *righteous GOD*; a *jealous GOD* *; and, to incorrigible Sinners, a *consuming Fire* †.—Though wonderfully condescending, yet transcendently majestic. Insomuch, that none of the fallen Race are permitted to approach his Throne, but only through the Intervention of a great MEDIATOR ‡.—Though unspeakably merciful, yet inflexibly just. Insomuch that, without Shedding of Blood, even the Blood of a PERSON higher than the Heavens, there is *no Remission* || of any Offences.

When the LORD says, *Fury is not in me* §, the Words have a peculiar Reference to his Church: which, in a preceding Verse, He had described as *A Vineyard of red Wine*. From his Church, from his own People, his fierce Anger is turned away, on Account of the Satisfaction made by their SAVIOUR.—Though his own People are the Objects, not of his Indignation, but of his Love, let no ungodly Wretches audaciously presume. It is not so with them. They are *the Briars and Thorns* ¶, mentioned in the next Clause: Cumberers of the Ground, unprofitable and noxious. Them He warns; them He challenges; *Who will set them in Battle against me?* Let them come on; they shall find it a fearful Thing, to fall into the Hands of

L 4

* Exod. xx. 5. † Heb. xii. 29. ‡ John xiv. 6.
 || Heb. ix. 22. Heb. vii. 26. § Isai. xxvii. 4.

¶ There is a fine Contrast between the *Vines* and the *Thorns*; at the same Time a regular Continuation of the Metaphor. As nothing is more common, than to see the latter shooting up amidst the former; so nothing is more common, than to have Hypocrites intermingle themselves with Believers.

the Living GOD.—Nay, He will not stay for their Approach: *I will march against them**; is his Threatening; *I will pass through them; I will burn them together.*—This will certainly be the Case, if not in the present, yet in a future World. O When once the Master of the House is risen up, and has shut to the Door, Mercy is gone for ever. Then Nothing must be expected, nothing will then be experienced, but *Vengeance and fiery Indignation, to devour the Adversaries of the Gospel.* GOD will then execute Judgments, on every Soul of Man, that has persisted in Evil. With such awful Severity will He execute them, as shall cause Heaven to adore, and Hell to tremble.

Yet in all this, there is not the least Tincture of that outrageous Temper, which in Man We properly call Fury. In Man Fury implies an immoderate Degree of Resentment, which will hearken to no Reasoning, and accede to no Terms. The Gospel Account proves, even to a Demonstration, that this has no Place in the divine Nature. So far from it, that GOD, though highly provoked, has provided an Atonement—has made *Overtures of Reconciliation* to his disobedient Creatures—has even besought†

* HYWDR.

† 2 Cor. v. 20. It was an Instance of singular Compassion in the blessed GOD, that, though offended with Job's Friends, He admitted of a Sacrifice, and directed them to an Intercessor; both typical of CHRIST JESUS. But what unparalleled Condescension, and divinely tender Mercies, are displayed in this Vene! *As though GOD did beseech You by Us: We pray You in CHRIST'S Stead, be ye reconciled to GOD.*—Did the Judge ever beseech a condemned Criminal, to accept of Pardon? Does the Creditor, at any Time, beseech a ruined Debtor, to receive an Acquittance in full? Yet

a guilty World, to accept of Forgiveness. This is the Passport of that gracious Invitation, which follows in the Prophet. *Let Him, let the wicked Man, take hold of my Strength*; let Him fly to my crucified S O N, who is the Power of G O D for the Salvation of Sinners; cleaving to his Merits by Faith, as some poor Delinquent to the Horns of the Altar*. Thus *He shall make Peace*; all his Iniquities shall be forgiven, and all my Displeasure shall be pacified.—So that the Insinuations of your satirical Gentlemen, are as egregiously mistaken, as they are shockingly worded.

You are a Man of Sense, *Theron*; and esteem that Character, far above the idle Reputation of a Wit. As such, let me ask You seriously; Is it not for the Honour of the Divine M A J E S T Y, to exercise Justice, as well as Mercy? Always to pardon, and never to punish, would be *Tameness*; rather than Benignity; a Renunciation of Holiness, rather than a Display of Goodness.—Or, can it be right in Us, so extravagantly to magnify the amiable, as to depreciate, nay even annihilate, the awful Attributes of the D E I T Y?—This, says a Poet, is the Theology, not of Christians, but of Infidels;

*Who set at odds Heaven's jarring Attributes,
And with one Excellence another wound;*
Maim
our Almighty LORD, and our Eternal JUDGE,
not only refuses to offer these Blessings, but invites
Us—intreats Us—with the most affectionate Importunity
beseeches Us—not to reject them!
This is the precise Idea included in the Original
scripture, and the Idea is as comfortable, as the Image is
expressive. *Isai. xxvii. 5. 1 Kings i. 50.*

*Maim Heaven's Perfection, break its equal Beams,
Bid Mercy triumph over—GOD himself,
Undeified by their opprobrious Praise:*

*A GOD all Mercy is a GOD unjust **

Ther. But We have lately been told, that the particular Grace of the LAWGIVER is not obstructed by any Demands of Law and Justice. For He can set them aside.

Assp. What! Set aside a Law, which is holy, righteous, and good!—Set aside a Justice, which is eternal, inflexible, and infinite!—St. Paul gives a very different Solution of this Difficulty. He tells Us—not that GOD set aside his Law and his Justice—but that He set forth the blessed JESUS for a Propitiation. With this express Design, that He might declare his Righteousness †; might demonstrate, not only his Clemency, but his Justice; even that vindictive Justice, whose Nature is, to abhor, and whose Office, to punish Sin.

This seems to be the Import of the Word *Righteousness*, in the present Connection. And more than seems, if We consult the following Verse. *To declare, I say, at this Time his Righteousness; that He might be just ‡, evidence Himself to be strictly and inviolably righteous, in the Administration of his Government; even while He is the all-forgiving gracious*

* Night-Thoughts, N^o IV. † Rom. iii. 25.

‡ Rom. iii. 26. The Attribute of Justice must be preserved inviolate. And inviolate it is preserved, if there was a real Infliction of Punishment on our SAVIOUR. Nothing else can thoroughly clear up this great Evangelical Paradox—JUST, YET JUSTIFIER OF THE UNGODLY!

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gracious *JUSTIFIER* of the Sinner, *that believeth in JESUS*.—According to this Plan, *Mercy and Truth meet together; Righteousness and Peace kiss each other* *. All the Attributes harmonize; every Attribute is glorified, and not one superseded, no, not so much as clouded.

Ther. If some are verging to one Extreme, are not you inclining to the other? Our Ears tingle, and our Blood runs chill, at the very Thoughts of so severe a Vengeance, executed on an Object so worthy and illustrious.—Besides, how can We suppose, that the beneficent CREATOR and PRESERVER of Men, should *take pleasure* in the Sufferings of the most unblameable Person, that ever existed? Especially, since He himself has made this tender Declaration; *I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice* †.

Asp. A tender Declaration indeed it is: signifying, that GOD is better pleased with the Duties of Humanity and Charity, than with the most costly and pompous Train of Sacrifices. Nay, that He will even dispense with the Observance of *his own* ceremonial Institutions, when they interfere with our Exercise of Beneficence *One to another*. Thus resigning (so admirable is his Goodness!) the Services due to Himself, for the Benefit and Comfort of his Creatures.—But this has no Sort of Relation to the Death of *CHRIST*. In which Mercy and Sacrifice, were not disjoined, but united. Which had, therefore, every Requisite, to make it most perfectly acceptable to the KING of Heaven.

We are assured by a Prophet, That *it pleased the LORD to bruise his holy Child JESUS*. GOD not

* Psal. lxxxv. 10.

† Matt. ix. 13.

not only gave up his SON to Sufferings, but gave Him up with a divine Complacency*.—In like manner, the blessed JESUS addressed Himself to the dreadful Task, not only without Reluctance, but with the utmost Alacrity †. *I delight to do thy Will*, was the Language of his Soul.—Should You ask, How could the SON take pleasure in undergoing,

* *Divine Complacency*.—This is the Idea included in the original Word פֶּסַח Isai. liii. 10. Which is but poorly and faintly represented by the *Bodas* of the *Septuagint*. It corresponds with the vigorous Phrase, used by the Voice from Heaven, *ωδοκνῶ*, Matt. iii. 17. Or, it may be very exactly translated by St. Paul's beautiful Expression, *ωραρίσθαι*, Heb. xiii. 16.—In Conformity to this Sentiment, the great JEHOVAH is said to smell a sweet Savour, or a *Savour of Rest* נִחֵם נִחֵם in those Sacrifices, which prefigured the crucified JESUS, Gen. viii. 21.

† *Utmost Alacrity*.—There is no Inconsistency between this Assertion, and our LORD's Supplication; *FATHER, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my Will, but thine be done*. *ὦν*, says Origen, *εἰ μὴ ὡδοκνῶς, ωραρίσθαι δὲ τοῖς Κυβερνῶσι*. This was the Voice, not only of Resignation, but of Acquiescence and Complacency.—Such a deprecatory Request, put up with so much Earnestness, yet with so much Submission, betrayed not any Weakness of Mind. It only shewed the Reality of our LORD's Manhood: that his Sensations were exactly like ours: that He affected no *Stoical Apathy*, but willingly endured, not proudly despised, Tribulation and Anguish. It demonstrated likewise, beyond the Power of Description, the extreme Severity, and almost insupportable Weight, of our REDEEMER's Affliction.

His tender Love to Mankind, and fervent Zeal for his FATHER's Glory, prompted Him to desire these Sufferings. His invincible Resolution and unequalled Magnanimity, emboldened Him to meet them, with a generous Ardour. Yet they were so terrible, that his Nature, being human, could not but recoil a little, at their Approach; and, had it not been divine also, must inevitably have sunk under the Load.

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or the FATHER in inflicting, the most agonizing Sorrows? I answer; On Account of that grand Series of Advantages, which, resulting from thence, will extend—upwards to Heaven—downwards to Earth—forwards through Eternity.

“A severe Vengeance, You say, such as makes “our Ears to tingle.”—This is the very Thing intended, to awaken and alarm presumptuous Offenders. That they may see their horrid Guilt; see their extreme Danger; and trifle no longer with the only Method of Reconciliation. A Method, calculated to strike the deepest Terror, even while it cherishes the brightest Hope—strike the *deepest Terror*, on every persevering Sinner—while it cherishes the *brightest Hope*, in every returning Transgressor.

Ther. If one of my Servants had affronted or injured me; I should, upon his submissive Acknowledgment, forgive his Fault, and not insist upon Satisfaction for the Wrong. Will You make the FATHER of Compassions, more inexorable in his Nature, more rigid in his Demands, than a human Master?

App. When You have a Servant, that owes his Being to your Power; that has received innumerable Benefits from your Bounty; yet has offered You innumerable Affronts, all attended with the most aggravating Circumstances, and all in *Defiance* of the *most righteous* Threatenings—When You are possessed of immortal Majesty, and incomprehensible Perfection; when Truth inviolable, and Justice inflexible, are essential to your Character—Then, *Theron*, the Parallel will hold good; and

Your Conduct shall be a Pattern for the Procedure of THE MOST HIGHEST.

Till then, You and I must be willing to forgive, because GOD has made it our bounden Duty; and because We have incomparably more to be forgiven by the JUDGE of the World, than We can possibly remit to our Fellow-creatures. In the mean Time, You will allow the great JEHOVAH, who is *glorious in Holiness*, to communicate his heavenly Favours, after a Manner becoming Himself. On such *august and honourable* Terms, as shall maintain the Rights of his universal Government, and manifest the consummate, the infinite Rectitude of his Nature.

Ther. Might not GOD have canceled our Transgressions, and received fallen Men into his Favour, without any Propitiation?—To deny this, would be to limit the HOLY ONE of *Israel*; and impose Conditions on that uncontrollable Sovereign, *Who giveth not Account of any of his Matters.*

Asp. We need not embarrass Ourselves, by entering upon Enquiries, which may seem to lie beyond the Limits of human Understanding. Enough for Us to know, that this Propitiation was *absolutely necessary*, with regard to the first Covenant. For, as GOD had solemnly declared, *In the Day Thou eatest thereof, dying Thou shalt die*; his Truth and Justice stood engaged to execute the Threatening. And no second *Adam* could restore the first, but by taking this Curse upon Himself.

*Die Man, or Justice must; unless for Him
Some other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid Satisfaction, Death for Death*.*

There-

* MILTON, Book III. 210.

Therefore the Divine JESUS, who lay in the Bosom of the FATHER, and knew the Counsels of Heaven, said; *The Son of Man MUST be lifted up** on the Cross. From which it appears, that a Propitiation was indispensably requisite.—Because, it was expressly foretold by the antient Prophets (and the Scripture cannot be broken) that the MESSIAH *should be cut off out of the Land of the Living*.—Because, a Variety of Types, and a Multitude of Sacrifices, *prefigured* his Death. One of the Types, pointed out the very Manner of his Suffering; and *all* the Sacrifices, detached from their Dependence on this great Oblation, would have been beggarly Elements—mere, unavailing, empty Ceremonies.

I apprehend, it is no Limitation of the uncontrollable SOVEREIGN, to suppose Him incapable of acting otherwise, than in perfect and perpetual Consistency with Himself.—Neither is it any Infringement on his absolute Sovereignty, that

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* John iii. 14. *Δι τού, &c.* The same Expression is used, Luke xxiv. 26.—Perfectly conformable to this leading Truth, is the current Language both of the Law and of the Gospel. Under the Law, GOD himself protests; *I have sworn, that the Iniquity of the House of Eli shall not be purged* *בזבח ובמנחה* *with Slaughtered-offering, or with Meat-offering for ever*; that is, no Kind of Oblation shall be accepted; the Guilt shall never be expiated, 1 Sam. iii. 14. Under the Gospel, the Apostle forewarns; *If We sin wilfully, by a final Apostacy from CHRIST, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sins*; they are, to such Persons, and in such Circumstances, absolutely irremissible, Heb. x. 26.—Which Phrases are evidently connected with, and founded on, this grand Doctrine; That the appointed, the *only* Way of obtaining Pardon from the righteous GOD, is, by the Intervention of an expiatory Sacrifice.

He cannot but order all Affairs, for the Honour of his Justice, his Fidelity, and each of his exalted Perfections.—This is the very Thing, which the sacred Writers express in their plain but strong Language; *GOD who cannot lie * : He cannot deny Himself.*

Ther. GOD is often said to forgive our Sins, particularly, in that sublime Passage, where He proclaims his Name to *Moses*. *The LORD, the LORD GOD, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, abundant in Goodness and Truth; keeping Mercy for thousands, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression, and Sin.* Now, Forgiveness is a free Thing. Freeness is implied in the very Nature of Pardon. Take away the former, and You destroy the latter.—If an Equivalent be given, Pardon is no longer Pardon, but a Purchase. Forgiveness ceases to be an Act of Grace, and becomes the Payment of a Debt.

Asp. The Text you quote is truly sublime, and equally comfortable. But You forget to mention one Article of very great Moment, which closes and completes the glorious Character. Which seems added on purpose, to prevent any wrong Apprehensions of the DEITY, and to guard against all Abuse of the Doctrine. *He will in no wise clear the Guilty †.*—GOD will not, on any Consideration

* Tit. i. 2.

† 2 Tim. ii. 13.

I He will in no wise clear the Guilty. Exod. xxxiv. 7. This Text is not without its Difficulty, especially in the Original.—*Steuerus* interprets the Words, *Et innocens non erit sine Piaculo*: He shall not be acquitted without a particular Sacrifice.—I think, they may be translated, with a little more Propriety and Exactness, thus; *Pardoning Iniquity,*

tion whatever, absolve the obstinate, persevering, irremediable Offender: neither will He acquit any of the guilty Race, absolutely, unconditionally, or without such a Satisfaction, as may repair the Honour of his injured Law.

We have Redemption through his Blood, says the Apostle, even the Forgiveness of our Sins *. It is Forgiveness, You see, though bought with a Price. It is Remission, though procured by Blood.—It is free, with regard to that sovereign BEING, who pardons. For, He was under no Obligation to admit of a propitiatory Sacrifice; but might, without any Diminution of his Dignity, have left all Mankind to perish in their Sins.—It is free, with regard to the obnoxious Creatures, who are pardoned. For, it is vouchsafed, without any Satisfaction demanded at their Hands, or any Penalty inflicted on their Persons.—It is in this respect also free; that an In-

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quity, Transgression, and Sin, ונקח לא ינקח though He will by no means let it go unpunished, meaning Sin: which is the immediate Antecedent; is expressed in the three preceding Words; and may very properly be referred to in this Clause. Then the Sense will be, as follows; “Though GOD pardons Sin, yet it shall not go unpunished. He will certainly inflict his righteous Vengeance, and exercise his punitive Justice, though not on the Sinner, whom He spares; yet on the SURETY, whom He has provided.”—In the same Manner Cocceius renders the Passage, *Et non exercens Impunitatem*; and expounds it much to the same Purpose.—We have this very Word, in the same remarkable Construction, Jer. xxx. 11. ונקח לא אנקח; which is translated, *I will not leave thee altogether unpunished*. Which precisely signifies, *Absolving I will not absolve Thee*; and, according to our Manner of speaking, imports, *I will by no Means acquit Thee, as innocent*.

* Eph. i. 7.

terest in the great Atonement is granted to Us, without the least Merit, or any *deserving* Qualifications of our own.

In all this, GOD is not only merciful, but most tenderly and inexpressibly merciful. And will any One calumniate this majestic and venerable Method of exercising Mercy? Because Provision is made for the equal Glory of Truth and Holiness?—Calumniate! Surely, it becomes Us to admire and adore, saying with the Psalmist; *Justice and Judgment are the Habitation of thy Throne* *. Justice satisfied, and Judgment fully executed, in the Person of the MEDIATOR, are the Basis or Foundation of thy Throne. The Foundation, on which thy Throne of Grace is erected, and from which all its Administrations proceed.

Then. Does not your Notion of a propitiatory Sacrifice, derogate from the Goodness of the Almighty FATHER; and transfer all our Obligations to the incarnate SON?

Ans. Is there not Goodness, in *allowing* a Substitute to suffer in our Stead?—Is there not still greater Goodness, in *providing* a Substitute for Us, without any Solicitation on our Part?—Is there not the very highest Exertion of Goodness, in devoting a dear, an only, an incomparably excellent SON; in devoting HIM to the dreadful Purpose?—This marvelous Scheme, far, very far from obscuring, most illustriously displays, the superabundant Loving-kindness of the FATHER.

GOD

* *Psal. lxxxix. 14.* The Original *בסיס* signifies a *Basis*, or *Supporter*. Which, when applied to a *Throne*, is evidently more proper than the Word *Habitation*.

GOD *so* loved the World, apostate and polluted as it was—*How* did He love it? To a Degree, unutterable by any Tongue; inconceivable by any Imagination; and only to be expressed by the infinitely precious Effects. *Loved it so, that He gave his only-begotten SON, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting Life* *. And does this derogate from the Goodness of the Almighty FATHER? Not barely to give Pardon and Life, but to give them through the Hands, nay, through the Wounds, the Agonies, the Death of his divinest, dearest SON!

Such Privileges, vouchsafed in any Way, must challenge the devoutest Acknowledgments. But, when attended with this additional Demonstration of Favour, they inflame Us with Gratitude, and transport Us with Admiration. They not only manifest, but † *commend* the divine Love: they shew it to the greatest Advantage; shew it in the utmost Perfection; with every Circumstance, of grand Recommendation, and high Endearment.—By this Means, blessed GOD, Thou hast unspeakably enhanced thy Benefits! Thou hast rendered

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them,

* John iii. 16.

† *Rom. v. 8. Συνιστά.* It seems to be an Image taken from the Practice of *Tradesmen*. Who, in shewing their Goods, point out and enlarge upon their Excellencies; setting in the clearest Light, whatever may bespeak their Worth, or recommend them to the Purchaser.—Perhaps, it may allude to the Custom of sending, with some favourite and worthy Person, *recommendatory Letters*. In which his good Qualities are described; and every Thing is mentioned, that may embellish his Character, and render his Presence respectable. In this Sense St. Paul uses those nearly related Words, *Consuevit, Consuevit*, 2 Cor. iii. 1.

them, though invaluable in *themselves*, exceedingly more so, by the *Manner* of conferring them!

Tor. Again in your Elevations, *Aspaso?*—The *World*, You know, is grown very rational and inquisitive; will admit nothing, but upon clear Evidence, and full Conviction. We expect, therefore, in all religious Enquiries, not the Flights of Fancy, or the Sallies of Zeal; but a Sobriety of Reason, and Solidity of Argument.

Asp. The *World*, rational as it is, seems, by the Taste of the present Age, no Enemy to Works of Fancy. The *World*, therefore, may not be displeased with an affecting Story. And a Story, suitable to the Occasion, just occurs to my Mind. Such as may serve to shadow forth, though very faintly, the surpassing Benignity and Grace of our crucified LORD.

A certain *Asiatic* Queen, departing this Life, left behind Her three accomplished Sons; all arrived to Years of Maturity.—The young Princes were at strife, who should pay the highest Respect to their royal Mother's Memory. To give Scope for their generous Contention, they agreed to meet at the Place of her Interment; and there present the most honourable Gift, they knew how to devise, or were able to procure.—The *Eldest* came, and exhibited a sumptuous Monument; consisting of the richest Materials, and ornamented with the most exquisite Workmanship.—The *Second* ransacked all the Beauties of the blooming Creation; and offered a Garland of such admirable Colours, and delightful Odours, as had never been seen before.—The *Youngest* appeared, without any pompous Preparation; having only a crystal Basin in one Hand, and

a silver Bodkin in the other. As soon as He approached, He threw open his Breast; pierced a Vein, which lay opposite to his Heart; received the Blood in the transparent Vase; and, with an Air of affectionate Reverence, placed it on the Tomb.—The Spectators, struck with the Sight, burst into a Shout of general Applause; and immediately gave the Preference to this last Oblation.

If it was reckoned such a singular Expression of Love, to expend a few of those precious Drops, for the Honour of a Parent: O! how matchless! how ineffable was the Love of *JESUS*, in pouring out all his vital Blood, for the Salvation of Enemies!

Ther. My greatest Objection is still to come.—If *CHRIST* suffered in our Stead; He must suffer that very Punishment, which was due to our Iniquities. This your orthodox Divines affirm to be incomparably worse than bodily Death; to be nothing less than the everlasting Displeasure of *GOD*.

Ass. The Punishment due to our Iniquities, was Shame, Death, and the divine Wrath.

As for *Shame*—Was ever Shame, like that Shame, which our despised *REDEEMER* bore?—Tho' Prince of the Kings of the Earth, yet born in a Stable, and laid in a Manger.—When an Infant, exiled from his own Country, and a Vagabond in a foreign Land.—When engaged in the Discharge of his Ministry, accused of the most flagitious Crimes, and branded with the blackest Names.—When brought to his Exit, apprehended as a Thief; condemned as a Malefactor; nay, the vilest of Malefactors, a Robber and a Murderer, is preferred before him.—His Executioners poured Contempt

upon all his venerable Offices. As a *King*, they ridiculed Him, by putting a Mock-Sceptre into his Hand; and crowning Him with ragged Thorns*, instead of a royal Diadem. They vilified his *prophetic* Character, by hood-winking his Eyes; striking his blessed Head; and then asking, in cruel Derision, *Who it was that smote Him* †. They cast Reproach upon his *priestly* Undertaking, when they sharpened their Tongues with malicious Irony, and shot out those bitter Words; *He saved Others, Himself He cannot save* ‡.—To render his Infamy as public, as it was shocking, they hung Him on a Tree; and exposed Him, defiled as He was with Spitting, and disfigured with Wounds, to the gazing Eyes and contumelious Scoffs of numberless Spectators.

If You doubt, whether *CHRIST* sustained the *Wrath* of *GOD*, let Us follow Him to the Garden of *Gethsemane*. A Scene, which I would always recollect, when I walk along the fertile Vale, or expatiate amidst the flowery Garden §, or enjoy the Delights of any rural Retirement.—He had no Remorse, to alarm his spotless Conscience; yet Fearfulness

* To have crowned the blessed *JESUS* with *Straw*, would have been a vile Insult, and treating Him like an ambitious Madman. But to crown Him with *keen, pungent, lacerating* Thorns, was adding Cruelty to their Insults; unheard of Barbarity to the most contemptuous Mockery. *Matt. xxvii. 29.*

† Scornfully insinuating, that his sacred prophetic Office was fit for nothing, but to serve such despicable Purposes. *Matt. xxvi. 68.*

‡ *1. Matt. xxvii. 42.*

§ Alluding to the Evangelist's Description of *Gethsemane*, who represents it as a Garden; and to the Etymology of the Word, which signifies a fat or fruitful Valley, *John xviii. 1. Matt. xxvi. 36.*

fulness and Trembling came upon Him. No Violence was offered to his sacred Person; yet a horrible Dread overwhelmed Him.—He was anointed with the Oil of Gladness; above his Fellows *. Yet so intense was his Affliction, that it fetched Tears † from his Eyes, and forced that melancholy Cry from his Lips; *My Soul is sorrowful; exceeding sorrowful; sorrowful even unto Death ‡.*—'Twas Night, cold Night; and though our Divine MASTER lay prostrate upon the Earth, amidst the Fall of chilling Dews, He sweat—He sweat Blood—Yea, so sore was this strange, unseen Conflict, that He sweat great Drops of Blood; *running down*, in reeking Streams, to the Ground.—What Cause, what adequate Cause, can be assigned for this amazing Anguish? None but the Wrath of his Almighty FATHER! Who was now become an inexorable JUDGE; treated Him no longer as the SON of his Love, but as the SURETY for unnumbered Millions of guilty Creatures.

Ther. Was it possible, that the innocent and holy JESUS, the *dearly beloved* SON of GOD, should become an Object of His FATHER's Wrath?

Assp. It was not only possible, but unavoidable and necessary. *Unavoidable*, with respect to the divine Holiness; *necessary*, for the Procurement of our Redemption.—Sin was charged upon CHRIST; all the Sins of all Believers, in all Ages and Places of the World. And could the infinitely righteous GOD behold such a Deluge of Iniquities, (those abominable Things, which He hateth) without expressing his Displeasure? Or could the blessed JE-

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* Psal. xlv. 7. † Heb. v. 7. ‡ Matt. xxvi. 38.

SUS be punished; *truly* punished for them, without any painful Sensation of their horrid Evil, and of that tremendous Indignation which they deserved. If this was not the Case, who can maintain the Dignity of his Conduct, during the Agony in the Garden?—Was there no Pouring out of the divine Displeasure? Then his Behaviour in that Hour of Tryal, did not equal the Intrepidity of the three Hebrew Youths; who continued calm, and without the least Perturbation, while the Furnace was heated into seven-fold Rage *.—But if this was the Time, in which, (no created Arm being strong enough to give the Blow) it pleased the LORD to bruise Him †; if this was the Time, in which the most high GOD bent his Bow like an Enemy, and stood with his Right-hand as an Adversary ‡; it is easy, very easy to account for the prodigious Consternation of our REDEEMER. No wonder that his Heart, though endued with otherwise invincible Fortitude, should become like melting Wax. For, who knoweth the Power of that Wrath, at which the Pillars of Heaven tremble ||?

Ah! *Theron*; the Vinegar and the Gall, which they gave Him to drink, were not half *so bitter*, as the Cup of his FATHER's Wrath. Yet, for our sake, He drank it off to the very Dregs.—The Nails, that pierced his Hands; the Spear, that cleft his Heart; were not half *so sharp*, as the Frowns of his eternal FATHER's Countenance.

Which, for our Consolation, He patiently submitted

Dan. iii. 16, 17, 18.
Ysa. liii. 10. The Prophet says not, It pleased the LORD, that wicked Men should bruise Him; but, It pleased the LORD himself to bruise Him.

† Lam. ii. 4.

|| Job xxvi. 11.

mitted to bear.—He was rent with Wounds, and racked with Pain; his Bones were dislocated; and his Nerves convulsed; a thousand thorny Daggers were planted in his Temples, and Life flowed out at ten thousand gushing Veins. Yet this, all this was gentle, was lenient, in comparison of those inexpressible Agonies, which penetrated his very Soul. The former, drew not a single Complaint from his Mouth: the latter, wrung from his breaking Heart that passionate Exclamation; *My GOD! My GOD! why hast Thou forsaken me?*—Astonishing Words! Surely, a Distress, beyond all Imagination grievous *, uttered them. Surely, the Vengeance, not of Men, but of Heaven itself, extorted them. Every Syllable of which speaks, what the mourning Prophet describes; *Is it nothing to You,*

all
* To heighten our Idea of this Distress, the Evangelists make use of the *most forcible* Words—*κατακτασθαι*, He was seized with the *most alarming* Astonishment—*κατακτασθαι*, He was overwhelmed with *insupportable Dejection*—*κατακτασθαι*, He was *besieged* on all sides, as it were, with an Army of *invading Sorrows*—He *wrestled*, amidst strong Cries and Tears, not only with the Malice of Men, and Rage of Devils, but with the infinitely more dreaded Indignation of GOD: He wrestled even unto an *Agony* of Spirit, *κατακτασθαι*. All these Circumstances of Horror and Anguish, constitute what a celebrated Poet very justly styles,

A Weight of Woe more than ten Worlds could bear!

The Critic, probably, will admire the Propriety and Beauty of this Line. Which, composed of nothing but Monosyllables, and clogged with the frequent Repetition of a cumbrous Consonant, makes the Sound remarkably apposite to the Sense.—May We all be *sacred Critics!* Have, not only a refined Taste, to relish such Elegancies of Composition, but an awakened Heart, to feel the Energy of such important Truths!

all Ye that pass by? Behold and see! if there be any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me, in the Day of his fierce Anger *?

Here, now, is our whole Punishment endured; Shame of the Cross, and the Sorrows of Death; the Suspensions of the ALMIGHTY's Favour, and the terrible Sensations of his Wrath.

Ther. Be it so. Yet all this amounts to no more, than Part of Payment. For, these Sufferings were transient; temporary only, not eternal. Therefore, the main Circumstance, the most bitter Ingredient, was wanting.

Ass. In the Estimate of divine Justice, and in point of penal Satisfaction, they were equivalent to our endless Punishment †. Especially, if We consider the Severity of the Sufferings, and the Dignity of the SUFFERER.

The Severity of the Sufferings.—Let me illustrate this Point by a Comparison. At the last Day, all those fierce eruptive Flames, which have raged in *Aetna*, in *Vesuvius*, and in every other burning Mountain throughout the World—All those confined subterranean Fires, which have so terribly shaken the Foundations of *Jamaica*, *Sicily*, and *Constantinople*.—In a Word, the whole Element of Fire, however employed through all the Revolutions of Time, wherever diffused through all the Regions of the Globe, will then be collected from all Quarters, and burst forth in one vast, resistless, general Conflagration. In some such Manner, all

that

1 Sam. i. 12.

† *Ita quidem ut brevis Passio CHRISTI aeternae Damnationis expellat. Et Unius Passio tot Electorum Myriadibus redimendis sufficiat.* WHTS. in Symb.

that Wrath, which was due to the innumerable Multitude of Sinners, redeemed from every People, and Nation; which, if executed on the offending Creatures, had been prolonged to eternal Ages; all that Wrath, contracted into one inconceivably dreadful Blaze, was *at once* poured out upon the interposing SURETY; *at once* flamed forth on our heavenly VICTIM.—This will appear more than probable, if, among other Particulars, We contemplate the unequalled Magnanimity of our LORD, who is styled *the Lion of the Tribe of Judah* *; and compare it with his bloody Sweat in the Garden, and his exceeding bitter Cry on the Cross †.

The Dignity of the SUFFERER.—Had our SAVIOUR's Sufferings been the Sufferings of a mere Man, or of the most exalted Angel, I acknowledge, they could have bore no Proportion to our Demerit. But they were the Sufferings of the PRINCE of Heaven, and the LORD of Glory: before whom all Men are as Dust, and all Angels as Worms.—Was an infinite MAJESTY offended? An infinite MEDIATOR atoned. Weigh the Dignity, the divine Dignity of the REDEEMER's Person, against the everlasting Duration of our Punishment. It will not only counter-balance, but preponderate.—Finite Creatures can never make an infinite Satisfaction; no, not through

* Rev. v. 5.

† I think, the Language of the *Greek Liturgy*, is the Language of strict Propriety, as well as of fervent Devotion, *Δι' αὐτοῦ τοῦ ὑπαπαντῆσαντος*. The Sufferings of our LORD, were, in their Measure and Weight, vast, tremendous, *unknown*: absolutely beyond the Reach of human Imagination.

through the most unlimited Progression of Ages. Whereas, when our LORD undertook the Work, being truly and properly infinite, He finished it *at once*.—So that his Sufferings, though temporary, have an All-sufficiency of Merit and Efficacy. They are, in this Respect, adequate; nay, on Account of the Infinitude of his Nature, they are more than adequate to an Eternity of Punishment.

It was *IMMANUEL*, it was the incarnate GOD, who *purchased the Church*, and redeemed Sinners, *with his own Blood* *. The immense Dignity and Grandeur of our SAVIOUR, communicated their ennobling Influence, to every Tear He shed, to every Sigh He heaved, to every Pang He felt. This renders his Sufferings a *perfect*, as their vicarious Nature renders them a *proper* Satisfaction. And though *the Wood of Lebanon was not sufficient to burn, nor all the Beasts thereof sufficient for a Burnt-offering* †; yet this Sacrifice fully answers the Exigence of the Case.—This Sacrifice sends up an ever-acceptable Odour to the Skies, and diffuses its sweet Perfume through all Generations: such as appeases Heaven, and revives the World.

Yes, *Theron*; You must give me Leave to repeat the sublime and delightful Truth. It was GOD, the great GOD, even our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, who gave Himself for Us †. His Sacrifice

* *Mat. xx. 28.* The original Words are remarkably emphatical. They express with the utmost Precision, they ascertain with the greatest Cogency, the most important and precious of all Truths. *The Church of GOD, which HE hath purchased with HIS OWN PROPER Blood.*

† *Isai. xl. 16.*

† *Tit. ii. 13, 14.*

fice therefore must be *inconceivably meritorious*. O! that Sinners, the *vilest* of Sinners, knew its *ally* sufficient Efficacy! They would no longer be holden in the Bonds of Iniquity, by that destructive Suggestion of the Devil, *There is no Hope*.*

Ther. What valuable End could such vicarious Sufferings accomplish? Suppose GOD absolutely inexorable, and they cannot avail. Suppose Him divinely merciful, and they are needless.

Asp. The Difficulty You propose, I think, has been obviated already. So that I have no Occasion to solve your Dilemma, but only to answer your Question. Which I shall do, first in general; by collecting into a Point, the Substance of this and the preceding Conference. These Sufferings—as a *Punishment*, gave ample Satisfaction to the divine violated Law—as a *Sacrifice*, they perfectly reconciled Us to our offended GOD—as a *Price*, they redeemed Us from every Evil, and purchased for Us a Title to all Good.

This is a Subject of the most distinguished Importance. Let not my *Theron* imagine, I would abuse his Patience, if I dwell a Moment longer on the favourite Topic.—A Topic, which attracts the Attention of Heaven, Earth, and Hell. The Cross of *CHRIST* is the Object of Approbation and ineffable Complacency, to the eternal CREATOR; of Wonder and Admiration, to all intelligent and holy Creatures; of Alarm and Anguish, to the infernal Hosts.—The Church of GOD, for above four thousand Years, was continually looking towards it, with Expectation and longing Desire.

fire. We are now looking *to it*, as the one Foundation of our Comfort; while other Generations are rising, and will rise in uninterrupted Successions, to behold it with renewed Ardour and Delight. And when Time shall be no more, innumerable Multitudes of Saints and Angels, will be looking *backwards on it*, with Adoration and Transport, even in the remotest Ages of Eternity.

Ther. True; but You have not mentioned the particular Ends, accomplished by this great Transaction.

Assp. I might enumerate many Ends, all magnificent and gracious. I content myself with specifying a few. But such as bring the highest *Glory* to GOD—administer the most solid *Comfort* to Man—and most effectually promote the Interests of *Piety*.

Here We have a Manifestation of inflexible Justice, in Concert with unbounded Goodness.—*Inflexible Justice*; in that the great and terrible GOD, though determined to exercise Mercy, would exercise it only in such a Manner, as might vindicate the Authority of his Law; might testify the Purity of his Nature; and declare the inviolable Faithfulness of his Word.—*Unbounded Goodness*; in that He with-held not his SON, his only SON, but freely gave Him up for Us all. Gave up “the **BRIGHTNESS** of his Glory,” to be covered with Infamy; gave up “the **BELOVED** of his Soul,” to expire in Agonies; on purpose to obtain Honour and Immortality for apostate Men.—The Torments inflicted on all the *Damned* in Hell, are not so fearful a Monument of GOD’s Justice, as those dying Agonies of the **LORD JESUS CHRIST**.

CHRIST. Nor could a *thousand Worlds*, bestowed on every Believer, have been such an Act of super-abundant Munificence, as that Gift of his ever-blessed SON.

Look We for *Power* and *Wisdom*?—To uphold the Humanity of **CHRIST**, under all the studied Cruelties of Men, under the insatiate Rage of Devils, and the far more tremendous Curse of the divine Law*: to conquer Sin, and Death, and Hell, by a Person bound with Fetters, nailed to a Tree, and crucified in *Weakness*: to expiate, by *one* Offering, the innumerable Millions of Crimes, committed by all his People, from the Beginning to the End of Time: was not this Power? matchless Power? astonishing Power?—And as for *Wisdom*, how admirable was the Contrivance, which could harmonize the seemingly opposite Claims of Mercy and of Justice! Could not only satisfy each, but magnify both!—Had Punishment been executed on the wretched helpless Sinner, Mercy had lost her amiable Honours. Had the Sinner been restored to Favour, without *any Penalties* sustained either by Himself or his SURETY, Justice had been set aside as an insignificant Attribute. Whereas, by our LORD's vicarious and expiatory Sufferings, both are manifested, and both are exalted.

There-

* *Isai. xlii. 6. I the LORD will hold thine Hand, and will keep Thee.* This is spoken of the MESSIAH. It gives Him Assurance of effectual Support, when the Vengeance of Heaven, the Fury of Hell, and the Sins of the World, should fall upon Him with united Violence. To support the MEDIATOR under these Circumstances, is mentioned as a very distinguished Act of that omnipotent Arm, which created the Heavens, and spread forth the Earth, and giveth Spirit to them that walk therein. Ver. 5.

Therefore the Scripture affirms, that GOD hath not only exercised, but *abounded in Wisdom and Prudence*—nay, hath *abounded in all Wisdom and Prudence* *, by this Combination of righteous Vengeance and triumphant Grace. Which is, at once, so honourable to Himself, and so advantageous to his People.

Ther. “*Advantageous to his People*”—I am glad, You are come to this Point. This is what I want to have cleared up. I am for those Doctrines, which glorify GOD, by doing Good to Man. Give me the Religion, whose Aspect is benign, and whose Agency is beneficial. Not like a *Meteor*, to dazzle Us with a vain Glitter. Not like a *Comet*, to terrify Us with a formidable Glare. But like yonder *Sun*, whose Beams shed Light, and diffuse Joy all around.

Asp. Is this what You seek, and what You prize? Then the *Christian Religion*, this Doctrine in particular, will answer your largest Expectations, and challenge your highest Esteem. For it is rich with Benefits of the most needful, the most desirable, and most exalted Kind.

The first and leading Blessing is *Pardon of Sins*.—Pardon, not of small Sins only, but of the most *aggravated*, the most *horrid*, the most *enormous*. Be they flaming as *Scarlet*, be they foul as the *Dung-hill*, be they black as *Hell* itself; yet they shall be as the *spotless Wool*, or as the *Virgin Snows* †; they shall, by Virtue of this grand Expiation, be as though they had never been.—Pardon, not of a few, but of *all Sins*. Be they numerous as the *Hairs of our Head*; numerous as the *Stars of Heaven*; or innumerable as the *Sands upon the Sea-shore*;

* Eph. i. 8.

† Isai. i. 18.

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more; the Blood of **JESUS CHRIST** cleanseth from them **ALL**.*

Hereby We have *Victory over Death*, and *Admittance into eternal Life*.—For thus saith the holy Apostle, concerning the poor Sojourners in Clay; Seeing therefore the Children were Partakers of *Flesh and Blood*, **HE** also partook of the same; that by undergoing *Death*, He might destroy Him who had the *Power of Death*, that is the Devil; and deliver those, who, through *Fear of Death*, were all their *Life-time* subject to *Bondage* †.—And thus saith the venerable Elder, concerning the triumphant Inhabitants of Heaven; *These are they, who came out of great Tribulation; and have washed their Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the LAMB: therefore are they before the Throne* ‡.

The *Philistines* rejoiced, when *Samson*, the Destroyer of their Country, was delivered into their Hands. How much greater Reason have We to rejoice, since the blessed **JESUS** has vanquished our last Enemy! Has made *Death* the Minister of endless Life, and the *Grave* a Gate to immortal Glory!—*Joseph* had Cause to be glad, when He put off his Prison-garments, and was clothed with Change of Raiment: when He was brought from the Dungeon to the Palace, and honoured with a Seat at the Right-hand of the King. But is it not an incomparably richer Blessing, to have our Robes washed in redeeming Blood, and our Souls cleansed from all Guilt? Is it not an incomparably higher Advancement; to be admitted into the blissful Presence, and to possess the everlasting Kingdom of **GOD**!

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* 1 John i. 7. † Heb. ii. 14, 15. ‡ Rev. vii. 14.

To comprehend all in a Word—Hereby are procured, even for the most unworthy Creatures, all the *Benefit* of the *New Covenant*. Therefore, the Blood of *CHRIST* is styled by a Prophet, *The Blood of the Covenant* *; by an Apostle, *The Blood of the everlasting Covenant* †; and our *LORD* himself says, *This is the new Covenant in my Blood* ‡.—Is it a Privilege to know *GOD*, the infinitely glorious Center and Source of all Perfection? Is it a most valuable Endowment, to have his holy Laws put into our Minds, and his heavenly Precepts written on our Hearts? Is it a Branch of real Felicity, to have our numberless Sins forgiven, and not one of our Iniquities remembered any more? Is it the Compendium of all Happiness, to have *GOD* for our Portion, and our exceeding great Reward? To be his peculiar Treasure, his loving and beloved People ¶.—Of all these We may say, They are *the Purchase* of *IMMANUEL*'s Blood: and whoever is truly interested in the latter, is unquestionably intitled to all the former.

Who then would refuse so comfortable a Doctrine? Which—

Ther. Is too comfortable, We might imagine, to be either true in itself, or safe in its Consequences. Must it not tend to embolden the Sinner in the Prosecution of his Vices? Who need scruple to transgress, or be very solicitous to repent; if an all atoning SACRIFICE has been offered, for every Kind, and every Degree of Wickedness?

Zeck. ix. 11. † *Heb. xiii. 20.*

‡ *Luke xxii. 20.* The original Word *διαθήκη* signifies either a Testament, or a Covenant.

¶ *Heb. viii. 10, 11, 12.*

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Ans. Would You have Sinners *intimidated*? Nothing speaks such Terror to the Children of Disobedience, as the bitter Passion, and accursed Death of **CHRIST**.—All the rhetorical Aggravations of Sin, with regard to its loathsome Nature, and execrable Vileness—all the Severity of Vengeance, executed upon rebellious Angels, or wicked Men—all, all are weak and inexpressive, compared with the *dreadful Emphasis* of this great Transaction. For, if the **LORD** Almighty spared not *his own SON*, when Sin was, not committed by Him, but only imputed to Him; how much less shall He spare *incorrigible* Offenders, who both habitually commit, and obstinately persist in, their daring Impieties?

If, by Repentance, You mean an *ingenuous Sorrow* for our Transgressions; nothing is so likely to break the stony, or melt the icy Heart, as these doleful Effects of Sin.—Let Us imagine Ourselves present at *Calvary*, and standing by the Cross. See! the innocent, the amiable, the illustrious **SAVIOUR**, hangs on a Tree. A Tree, torturous as the Rack, and ignominious as the Gibbet!—See! his Face is foul with spitting, and his Back tore with the Scourge. His Veins stream with Blood, and his Heart is wounded with Anguish.—There He hangs, abandoned by his Friends; reviled by his Enemies; and forsaken even by his **GOD**.—Can We reflect, that *We*, even *We* were the Cause of this inconceivable Misery; and not feel Remorse in our Consciences, or Sorrow in our Minds? Can We reflect, that for *Us*, for *Us* He bore this amazing Torment; and not smite our Breasts, or be pained at our very Souls?

If, by Repentance, You mean a *thorough Renunciation* of all Iniquity; no Motive is so effectual, to divorce the Heart from every abominable Idol, and divert the Feet from every evil Way, as an attentive Consideration of our REDEEMER's Death.—Whose Indignation does not rise against the infamous Wretch, that betrayed the blessed JESUS? Who is not ready to detest those invenomed Tongues, which accused Him; and those barbarous Hands, which crucified Him? Yet our Lusts were more guilty, in this Respect, than Judas or the Jews. Our Lusts and evil Deeds were the principal Actors in this deepest of Tragedies: How then can We care; how can We entertain; yea, how can We endure those execrable Iniquities, which were the *Betrayers and Murderers* of the PRINCE of Life?—*He bore our Sins in his own bleeding, agonizing Body on the Tree*; not that We should be emboldened to repeat them, but incited to abhor them, and induced to forsake them. That, in our Practice and our Affections, We should be averse, be even *dead to Sin* *.

If You would have *Benevolence*, your favourite Principle, take place and operate; it is impossible to urge so endearing a Persuasive to universal Goodwill, as this *Kindness and Love of GOD our SAVIOUR* †. How can We indulge the Sallies of Resentment, or harbour the Seeds of Animosity; when the meek, the merciful, the infinitely gracious REDEEMER, laid down his Life for his *bit-terest Enemies*? How can We treat with Contempt or Indifference, even the *meanest* of Mankind; since our Divine MASTER gave his all-glorious Person,

* 1 Pet. ii. 24.

† Tit. iii. 4.

Ion, for the vilest Wretches and most miserable Sinners?—Never was there so winning a Call to disinterested Charity, as the amiable Example of *CHRIST*. Never so binding a Cement of brotherly Love, as the Blood of the crucified *JESUS*.

In short; would You have People possessed of every heavenly Virtue, and animated to the Practice of every good Work? Nothing administers so powerful an Incitement to them all, as a *lively* and *appropriating* Sense of this wonderful Grace. Set home by the *HOLY GHOST**, it produces such a warm Gratitude, and such a Heart-felt Joy, as are far more operative, than the most awful Threatenings, or the most cogent Reasonings.—So that, quite contrary to your Suspicions, the native Tendency of this excellent Doctrine, is, to suppress Ungodliness, and promote Piety.

Observe the present calm Evening, yonder mild declining Sun, and these soft balmy Breezes. How they have unlocked the flowery Prisons, and poured a *Profusion of Odours* through the Air. How they have inspirited the little Songsters of the Grove, and fetched *lavish Harmony* from their Throats. So sweetly will a true Belief in *JESUS CHRIST*

N 3

and

* The Reader will give me Leave, on this Occasion, to subjoin the noble *Doxology* of our Church. Which, when thus applied, may be an excellent Means, both of expressing our Gratitude, and of quickening our Devotion.—*Glory be to the FATHER*; for providing this all-sufficient Attonement, and giving his SON to save a ruined World.—*Glory be to the SON*; for humbling Himself to the Death of the Cross, and obtaining eternal Redemption for Sinners.—*Glory be to the HOLY GHOST*; for testifying of *CHRIST* in our Hearts, and appropriating this great Salvation to our Souls.

and Him crucified, draw forth all the Powers of the Soul, in Acts of ready and chearful Obedience.—He is therefore said, not only to justify, but also to *sanctify the People with his Blood* *.

Let Us consider the Death of **CHRIST**, in this its full Grandeur and extensive Efficacy; and We shall discern the admirable Propriety of the Apostle's Remark: *It became Him, for whom are all Things, and by whom are all Things, in bringing many Sons unto Glory, to make the CAPTAIN of their Salvation perfect through Sufferings* †. IT BECAME; as an Act of Sovereignty in GOD, it comported with the Dignity, and emblazoned (if I may so speak) the incomprehensible Majesty of all his Perfections.—As an Execution of *impartial Vengeance* on our SURETY, it asserted the Rights of divine Government, and secured the utmost Veneration to the divine Law.—As an Emanation of *rich Indulgence* to Us, it redressed all our Misery, and retrieves our whole Happiness.—In *each, in every* Respect, it claims the most grateful and adoring Acceptance from sinful Man; it will be had in everlasting Honour, by the Choirs of Saints, and the Hosts of Angels; and it is worthy of that high Encomium from JEHOVAH Himself, in this I AM WELL PLEASED.

Ther. I thank You, *Aspasio*. Your Arguments have not indeed converted me, but they have strengthened my Faith. I never was so unhappily mistaken, as to disbelieve the Satisfaction made by our LORD JESUS CHRIST, made to divine Justice, made for the Sins of the World. But, I now see more clearly

* Heb. xiii. 12.

† Heb. ii. 10.

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clearly its Reasonableness and Importance; its cheering Aspect on the *guilty* Conscience, and its benign Agency on the *moral* Conduct.

Asp. I congratulate my dear *Theron*, on his thorough Conviction of this important Truth. May He be favoured with more enlarged and instructive Views of the fundamental Article! And may every renewed View be more and more influential on his Heart!

It is wonderfully pleasing, to mark the Process of Vegetation, in this opening Season of the Year. How the Hedges begin to bud: how the Bud swells upon the admiring Sight, and ventures farther into the inviting Air: how the cheering Green expands itself more and more, and is continually upon the advancing Hand. Till it throws a Robe of Verdure, over Plants and Trees; over Hills and Vales, over all the Surface of the Earth. So, may our Views of the incarnate GOD, and our Faith in his grand Atonement, be always progressive, and always operative! Till they have diffused their Influence through the whole Soul; have refined the whole Temper; and beautified all our Conversation.

This is the Way, these Views of the incarnate GOD, and his great Atonement, to evangelical Holiness. And is it not the Way of Peace and Pleasantness? Reviving, ravishing Thought! To have HIM for our bleeding *Victim*! HIM for our great *Propitiation*! at whose Feet the Armies of Heaven bow, and the Saints in Light adore!—Reviving, ravishing Thought! To have *all* our Punishment sustained, and the *whole* Curse of the Law exhausted; so that Justice itself can demand

no more!—Nay; to have so perfect a Ransom paid for our Redemption, that it is not *barely* an Act of favourable Indulgence, but of Truth and Equity * also, to pardon, accept, and glorify the Believer! —In such a Method of Reconciliation, how fully does the Judgment acquiesce! How securely may the Conscience rest!

Excuse me, *Theron*. My Affections are again upon the Soar. But I clip their Wings.—Only let me ask, Is not this Doctrine the *grand Peculiarity* of the Gospel; by which it stands distinguished from every other Religion, professed in the World? —Is it not the *central Point*, in which all the Lines of Duty unite, and from which all the Rays of Consolation proceed?—Strike this Article from the Creed, and You reduce the Mystery of Godliness to a System of Ethics: You degrade the Christian Church into a School of moral Philosophy.—To deny the Expiation made by our REDEEMER'S Sacrifice, is to obscure the *brightest Manifestation* of divine Benignity, and to undermine the *principal Pillar* of practical Religion; is to make a desperate Shipwreck of our everlasting Interests, and dash Ourselves to death, on the very *Rock of Salvation*.

* Therefore the Apostle says, *GOD is faithful and just to forgive Us our Sins*, 1 John i. 9. *Faithful*; because He had promised this Blessing, by the unanimous Voice of all his Prophets.—*Just*? Surely then He will punish? No; for this very Reason He will pardon.—This may seem strange: but, upon the evangelical Principles of Atonement and Redemption, it is apparently true. Because, when the Debt is paid, or the Purchase made, it is the Part of *Equity* to cancel the Bond, and deliver up the purchased Possession.

Ther. Now, I believe, it is Time to repair Home-wards. And I hope, it will be no disagreeable Exchange to my *Aspasie*, if We resign our Seat on the Mount, for a Place in the Dining-room.

Asp. Pray, let me enquire, as We walk along (for I was unwilling to interrupt our Discourse, merely to gratify my Curiosity) What may be the *Design* of yonder *Edifice*; which rises on a small Eminence, near the public Road? It is neither a Tower, nor a Dwelling-house; but looks like a stately Column, erected on purpose to beautify the Prospect.

Ther. It is a sort of monumental Pile. Erected, as the Story goes, on a very memorable Occasion.—Queen *Eleanor* accompanied King *Edward the First* to (what was called) the Holy War. In which He gained signal Advantages over the Infidels, and acquired a large Share of Renown to Himself. After many gallant Exploits performed in the Field, a treacherous and desperate *Saracen*, being admitted into his Chamber, under Pretence of private Business, wounded Him with an impoisoned Dagger. The Consequence of which, his Physicians declared, must be inevitable and speedy Death, unless the Poi-son was sucked out by some human Mouth. This might possibly preserve the royal Patient, but would be extremely dangerous to the Operator.

Dangerous as it was, his Queen claimed the Office; insisted upon it, as the Consort's Right; and executed it so faithfully, that She saved the King's Life; so happily, that She lost not her own.—After this, She returned to *England*; lived many Years; and bore several Children. But, sooner or later, Royalty itself must pay the Debt to Nature. Dying,
on

on a Journey to Scotland; She was brought back to the last and long Home of our *English Monarchs* *. Where-ever her Corpse rested, in the Way to its Interment, a Structure † (such as You now behold) was raised: as a public Testimony to her Merit, and in order to perpetuate the Memory of her conjugal Affection.

Assp. And should not our Hearts be a Monument of Gratitude to the blessed *JESUS*? Who drew the deadly Venom, not from our Veins, but from the immortal Part of our Nature: and not at the Hazard, but at the Loss, the certain and unavoidable Loss of his own most precious Life.—He opened his Breast, opened his very Soul, to the keenest Arrows of vindictive Justice; that, transfixing Him, they might drop short of Us, “The Poison whereof “drank up his Spirits ‡,” that the Balm of Peace might refresh ours.

O my *Theron*! Let our Memories be the Tablet, to record this unexampled Instance of Compassion and Goodness. Let our Affections dwell upon the tragical, the delightful History; till they are inflamed with Love, and melt into Contrition.—If We want an *Inscription*, let Us make use of those noble

* *Westminster Abbey.*

† One of these Structures stands on the high Road, near *Northampton*. It is surrounded with a large Flight of Steps, at the Bottom; and ornamented, towards the Top, with four female Statues, in full Proportion. A *Latin* Inscription informs the Traveler, concerning its Occasion and Design;

*In perpetuam conjugalis Amoris
Hoc Reginae Eleanore Monumentum,*

‡ *Job vi. 4.*

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noble Lines, which, in the finest Climax imaginable, describe the Magnificence and Grace of this most astonishing Transaction :

*Survey the wondrous Cure,
And at each Step let higher Wonder rise.
Pardon for infinite Offence!—And Pardon
Through Means that speak its Value infinite!
A Pardon bought with Blood!—With Blood divine!—
With Blood divine of HIM, I made my Poe!—
Persisted to provoke!—Though woo'd and aw'd,
Blest and chastis'd, a flagrant Rebel still!—
Ner I alone! A rebel Universe!
My Species up in Arms!—Not one exempt!
Yet for the foulest of the Foul, He dies *!*

* Night-Thoughts, N° IV.



D I A



DIALOGUE V.



SPASIO, having some Letters of Importance to answer, as soon as the Cloth was taken away, retired from Table.—His epistolary Engagements being dispatched, he enquired for *Therion*. The Servants informed Him, that their Master walked into the Garden.—A very little Search found Him, seated on an airy Mount, and sheltered by an *elegant Arbour*.

Strong and substantial Plants of *Liburnum* formed the Shell; while the slender and flexile Shoots of *Syringa* filled up the Interstices.—Was it to compliment, as well as to accommodate their worthy Guests, that the Shrubs interwove the luxuriant Foliage? Was it to represent those tender but close Attachments, which had united their Affections, and blended their Interests?—I will not too positively ascribe such a Design to the Disposition of the Branches. They composed, however, by their twining Embraces, no inexpressive Emblem of the *Endearments* and the *Advantages* of Friendship. They composed a Canopy, of the freshest Verdure,

and of the thickest Texture. So thick, that it entirely excluded the sultry Ray *; and shed both a cool Refreshment, and an amusive Gloom: while every unsheltered Tract, glared with Light, or fainted with Heat.

You enter by an easy Ascent of Steps, lined with Turf, and fenced with a Balustrade of sloping Bay-trees.—The Roof was a fine *Concave*, peculiarly elevated and stately. Not embossed with Sculpture; not mantled over with Fret-work; but far more delicately adorned with the Syringa's *silver Tufts*, and the Liburnum's *flowering Gold*. Whole large and lovely Clusters, gracefully pendent from the leafy Dome; disclosing their Sweets to the delighted Bee; and gently waving to the balmy Breath of Spring; gave the utmost Enrichment to the charming Bower.

Facing the Entrance, lay a spacious grassy Walk; terminated by an octangular Basin, with a curious *Jet d'Eau* playing in the Center. The Waters, spinning from the lower Orifices, were attenuated into innumerable little Threads; which dispersed themselves in an horizontal Direction, and returned to the Reservoir in a drizzling Shower. Those, which issued from the higher Tubes, and larger Apertures, either sprung perpendicularly, or spouted obliquely; and formed, as they fell, several lofty Arches of liquid Crystal; all *glittering on the Eye*, and *cooling to the Air*.

Parallel to the Walk ran a *Parterre*; planted with an Assemblage of Flowers. Which advanced, one above another, in regular Gradations of Height, of Dignity, and of Beauty.—First a Row of *Daisies*;

* *Solis inaccessum Radius.*

VIRG.

gay as the Smile of Youth, and fair as the Virgin's Snows.—Next, a Range of *Geraniums*, like a long Stripe of yellow Satin, quilted with Threads, or diversified with Sprigs of Green.—A superior Order of *Ranunculuses*, each resembling the Cap of an Earl's Coronet, replenished the third Story with full-blown Tufts of glossy Scarlet.—Beyond this, a more elevated Line of *Tulips* *, raised their

* Here is, it must be confessed, some little Deviation from the general Laws of the Season; some *Anachronism* in the Annals of the Parterre. The Flowers united in this Representation, do not, according to the usual Process of Nature, make their Appearance together. However, as by the Oeconomy of a skilful Gardener, they may be thus associated; I hope, the Possibility of the Thing, will screen my flowery Productions from the Blasts of Censure!—Or, may I not shelter my blooming Assembly, under the Remark of a masterly Critic? Which is as *pertinent* to the Case, as if it had been written on purpose for our Vindication; and in all respects so *elegant*, that it must adorn any Work, which quotes it; and charm every Person, who reads it.

“ A Painter of Nature is not obliged to attend Her in
“ her slow Advances, which she makes from one Season
“ to another; or to observe her Conduct in the successive
“ Production of Plants and Flowers. He may draw into
“ his Description all the Beauties of the Spring and Au-
“ tumn; and make the whole Year contribute something
“ to render it more agreeable. His Rose-trees, Wood-
“ bines, and Jessamines may flourish together; and his
“ Beds be covered at the same Time with Lilies, Violets,
“ and Amaranthuses. His Soil is not restrained to any
“ particular Set of Plants, but is proper either for Oaks
“ or Myrtles, and adapts itself to the Product of every
“ Climate.—Oranges may grow wild in it; Myrrh may
“ be met with in every Hedge; and if He thinks it pro-
“ per to have a Grove of Spices, He can quickly com-
“ mand Sun enough to raise it. His Concerts of Birds
“ may be as full and harmonious, and his Woods as
“ thick

flourished Heads, and opened their enameled Cups; not bedecked with a single Tint only, but glowing with an intermingled Variety of radiant Hues. Above all arose, that noble Ornament of a royal Escutcheon, the *Flower-de-Luce*; bright with ethereal Blue, and grand with imperial Purple. Which formed, by its graceful Projections, a Cornish or a Capital of more than *Corinthian* Richness; and imparted the most consummate Beauty to the blooming Colonade.

The Whole, viewed from the Arbour, looked like a *Rainbow*, painted upon the Ground. And wanted nothing to rival that resplendent Arch, only the Boldness of its Sweep, and the Advantage of its ornamental Curve.

To this agreeable Recess *Theron* had withdrawn Himself. Here He sat musing and thoughtful; with his Eye fixed upon a Picture, representing some magnificent Ruins.—Wholly intent upon his Speculation, He never perceived the Approach of *Aspasio*; till He had reached the Summit of the Mount, and was ready to take a Seat by his Side.

Asp.

“thick and gloomy, as He pleases. He is at no more
“Expence in a long Vista, than a short one; and can as
“easily throw his Cascades from a Precipice of half a
“Mile high, as from one of twenty Yards. He has his
“Choice of the Winds, and can turn the Course of his
“Rivers, in all the Variety of *Meanders*, that are most
“delightful to the Reader’s Imagination. In a Word;
“He has the Modeling of Nature in his own Hands,
“and may give Her what Charms He pleases, provided
“He does not reform her too much, and run into Absurdities by endeavouring to excel.”

Ass. Lost, *Theron!* quite lost in Thought! And unaffected with all these amiable Objects; insensible amidst this Profusion of Beauties; which, from every Quarter, make their Court to your Senses!—*Me.* thinks, the snarling *Cynic* in his Tub*, could hardly put on a greater Severity of Aspect, than my polite Philosopher in his blooming *Eden*.

Ther. Ah! my dear Friend, these flowery Toys which embellish the Garden, are familiar to my Eye, and therefore cheap in my Esteem. I behold them frequently; and, for that Reason, feel but Little of the pleasing Surprise, which they may possibly awaken in a Stranger.—Something like this We all experience, with regard to Events infinitely more worthy our admiring Notice. Else, why are We not struck with a Mixture of Amazement, Veneration, and Delight, at the grand Machinery and magnificent Productions of Nature?

That the Hand of the ALMIGHTY should wheel round the vast terrestrial Globe, with such prodigious *Rapidity*, and exact *Punctuality*; on purpose to produce the regular Vicissitudes of Day and Night; on purpose to bring on the orderly Succession of Seed-time and Harvest!—We wonder, when we read of the *Israelites*, sojourning forty Years in the Desert, marching backward and forward over its burning Sands; and find neither their Clothes

wearing

* *Diogenes*—Whose House, We are told, was a Tub; and his whole Furniture, a Staff, a Leathern Bag, and a Wooden Cup. At this curious Mansion, *Alexander the Great*, attended with his Courtiers, made the Philosopher a Visit. The Monarch, having saluted Him in the most obliging Manner, asked, If He wanted any Thing? Yes; replied the *Cynic*, that You would stand a little out of the Sunshine; and not take away what you cannot give.

waxing old * by so long a Use, nor their Feet swelling † with such painful Journies. Yet we are neither impressed with Wonder, nor affected with Gratitude, while We enjoy the Benefits of the Air, which clothes the Earth as it were with a Garment: which has neither contracted any *noxious* Taint, through the extensive Revolution of almost six thousand Years; nor suffered any *Diminution* of its natural Force, though exercised in a Series of unremitted Activity, ever since the elementary Operations began.

This Draught in my Hand, shews Us the Instability of the grandest, *most laboured* Monuments of human Art. They are soon swept away, among the other feeble Attempts of Mortality: Or remain only, as You see Here, in shattered Ruins; Memorials of the vain and powerless Ambition of the Builders.—How strange then, that a Structure, incomparably more tender and delicate, should be preserved to *old Age*, and *hoary Hairs*! That the bodily Machine, which is so exquisite in its Frame, so complicated in its Parts, and performs so many Thousands † of Motions

* Deut. viii. 4.

† Neh. ix. 21.

† *Thousands*—Not to mention the *spontaneous*, if We consider only the *mechanical* Motions, which are continually performed in the animal System—the digestive Action of the Stomach—the vermicular Agitation of the Bowels—the Progress of the Chyle through the lacteal Vessels—the many, many Operations of the secreting Glands—the Compression of the Lungs, and all their little cellular Lodgments, by every Act of Respiration—above all, that grand Impetus, the Systole of the Heart; which, by every Constriction, darts the crimson Current through an innumerable Multitude of Arteries; and drives, at the same Instant of Time, the reflux Blood through an innumerable

tions every Moment, should continue *unimpaired*, yet act without Intermission, so many Days, and Weeks, and Months, and Years.—How strange all this! Yet, because common, how seldom does it excite our Praise, or so much as engage our Notice!

Ans. Your Remarks are as just, as the Neglect of them is customary.—Unaccountable Supineness! Though GOD doeth great Things, worthy of all Observation; yea, and Wonders without Number: We yawn with Indolence, instead of being animated with Devotion, or transported with Delight. Lo! *He goeth before Us*, in evident Manifestations of Wisdom and Power, yet *We see Him not*: *He passeth on also*, and scatters unnumbered Blessings from his providential Hand, but *We perceive Him not* *.

This, though greatly culpable, is to be reckoned among the *smallest* Instances of our ungrateful Insensibility.—Are We not inattentive even to the Work of Redemption? That Work, which, according to the emphatical Declaration of Scripture, *exceeds in Glory* †. Is by far the greatest, the most marvelous of all sublunary, perhaps, of all divine Transactions.

The Sea has been divided: the Dead have been raised: a World has been created; created out of nothing; created only by a Word.—But what are all these Miracles, compared with the Incarnation of the eternal GOD? And of *this* matchless Miracle have We not been careless, unmoved Spectators?

—considered in a View of the innumerable Multitude of corresponding Views—Such a View will oblige Us to acknowledge, that *Pheron's* Account is far from being extravagant; that it rather *diminishes*, than *exaggerates* the real Fact.

* Job ix. 10, 11. ○

† 2 Cor. iii. 9.

tors? Have We not admired many a trifling Incident, more, far more than this wonderful Dispensation of Grace?—O *Theron*! Are We not shamefully unaffected, even though the KING of Kings vouchsafes to exchange his Throne, for the low Estate of a Servant, and the cursed Death of a Malefactor? Though He is pleased, by the Imputation of his active as well as passive Obedience, to become *The LORD our Righteousness*, yet—

Ther. You are taking an effectual Way, *Aspasio*, to rouse me from my Reverie, and make me indeed like the snarling Philosopher. “Imputed Righteousness is a Scheme grossly frivolous and absurd; utterly insufficient to answer the End proposed; and, One would think, could never be depended on, where there is the least Degree of Understanding, and Capacity for Reasoning *.”

Asp.

* The Reader will probably be disgusted, at this Heat of Temper, this *Asperity* of Diction, and both so abruptly introduced.—I have no Apology to make for my *Theron*. The Reader has Reason to be disgusted; has Reason to be chagrined. Only let me desire Him to remember, That this is the very Spirit, nay these are the very Words, of a celebrated Opposer of our Doctrine; not added, when He has fully proved the Absurdity of the Scheme; but assumed, even upon the Entrance to his Discourse.

I have often wondered, that Disputants, especially on religious Subjects, should chosse to deal in such acrimonious and reproachful Language. Does the Wrath of Man work the Righteousness of GOD? Or, is a passionate Inveective the proper Means, either to conciliate our Affections, or convince our Judgment?—Why should We not write in the same genteel and obliging Strain, in which We converse? Were We to meet our Antagonist in a Friend's Parlour, and have a personal Conference on the Subject, our Speech would be kind, and our Remonstrances calm; —“I am sorry, Sir, that You have espoused

Alp. Who is warm now, *Theron*? May I not remind my Friend, that the *Resentful* is no more fitted to work Conviction, than the *Rapturous*?—Perhaps, You have not duly considered this Subject; nor seen it in the proper Point of View. I have sometimes beheld a Ship of War, several Leagues off at Sea. It seemed to be a *dim cloudy* Something, hovering on the Skirts of the Horizon; contemptibly mean, and not worthy of a Moment's Regard.—But, as the floating Citadel approached, the Masts arose; the Sails swelled out; its stately Form, and curious Proportions, struck the Sight. It was no longer a shapeless Mass, or a Blot in the Prospect, but the *Master-piece* of human Contrivance, and the *noblest* Spectacle in the World of Art.

Who knows, *Theron*, but this sacred Scheme likewise, which You now look upon as a *confused Heap* of Errors, may very much improve, when more closely examined. May, at length, appear a wise and benign Plan; admirably fitted to the Condition of our fallen Nature; and perfectly worthy, of GOD to ordain, of Man to accept.

Ther.

“such Notions. They seem to me, extremely wrong and equally dangerous. I am apt to think, You have not duly considered, either the little Ground, they have to support them; or the pernicious Consequences, that may attend them.”

Why should not our Controversies from the Press be carried on, with such a *candid* and *amicable* Strife? This would certainly render them, more pleasing to the Reader; more profitable to the Public; and much more likely to have their desired Effect upon our Opponent.—For my Part, I admire the Humanity and Tenderness of the Poet's Resolution; even more than the Boldness of his Figures, or the Beauty of his Expression:

Tu Lapides loqueris, ego byssina Verba reponam.

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Ther. I know not what may happen, *Aspasio*. But there seems to be very little Probability of such a Change. For, though my last Opposition was a *mock Fight*; in my present Objections, I am *very sincere*.—To go, by an *imputed* Righteousness, to Heaven! To obtain Honour and Immortality, by the Obedience of *Another*! Who can credit such Chimeras? Who can swallow such Camels?

When such Doctrines are seriously advanced, I cannot forbear recollecting the Scheme of Bishop *Wilkins*. Who would persuade Us (good Man!) to sail or ride Post, not to our Neighbours on the other Side of the *Tweed*; not to our Colonies, on the other Side of the Globe; but to our Friends and Allies in the Moon. And this same Voyage or Journey we are to perform, by the Help of some Machine; to be constructed, I cannot tell where; to be managed, no body knows how.—“Ay; says an arch Lady; All this would be very pretty. But pray, Doctor, what shall We do for Lodging and Provisions by the Way?”

Asp. Don't you remember the Reply to this ironical Question?—“We will call, says the Doctor, at one of your Ladyship's Castles. Which, for our singular Conveniency, you have been, these many Years, building in the Air.”—Every Attempt to enter into Heaven, unless it be founded on the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, I will venture to call *Building Castles in the Air*. And, if I may retort your own Simile, not a whit less chimerical, than the Whim of traveling to the Moon, with all this Luggage of Flesh and Blood.

But I beseech you, let Us discard *Irony*, as well as Whim. Turn them both out of the Court. If

a Jury is impanelled, to try me and my Doctrine, I shall certainly except against Irony. Generally speaking, He is neither a *good* Man, nor a *true*. According to the best of my Remembrance, You Yourself consented to set Him aside in this Debate. Let Us therefore, not affect what is smart, but urge what is solid.

Ther. Agreed. The Notion of a substituted and vicarious Righteousness, is absurd even to common Sense, and to the most natural and easy Reflections of Men.

Assp. It may not, my dear Friend, agree with our natural Apprehensions; nor fall in with the Method, which *We* might have devised, for the Salvation of Mankind. But this is the Voice of Scripture, and a Maxim never to be forgotten; *GOD's Thoughts are not as our Thoughts, nor his Ways as our Ways* *.

*** This Notion, You say, is absurd even to common Sense.—A Saying, upon which I must beg Leave to put a Query. It was, I own, absolutely beyond the Power of common Sense, unassisted by divine Revelation, to *discover* this Truth.—I will grant farther, That this Blessing infinitely *transcends*, whatever common Sense has observed, in all her converse with finite Things.—But, if I have any the least Acquaintance with common Sense, I am persuaded, *She will not, She cannot* pronounce it an Absurdity. To this Judge I refer the Cause.

And to open the Cause a little, let me just observe, That GOD imputed our Sins to his SON. Why else is it said? That, at his second Coming, He shall appear *without Sin* †: Plainly implying, That, at his first Coming, He appeared *with Sin*. Not

indeed

* Isai. lv. 8.

† Heb. ix. 28.

indeed committed by Him, but laid upon Him; or imputed to Him.

How else could the immaculate **JESUS** be punished, as the most inexcusable Transgressor? *A-*wake, O Sword, against the Man that is my Fellow, *sith the LORD of Hosts* *.—Is not this the Voice of a Judge, pronouncing the Sentence, and authorizing the Execution? Or rather, does it not describe the Action of Justice, turning the Sword from Us, and sheathing it in **CHRIST**?

If **CHRIST**, then, was our Substitute, with regard to *penal Suffering*; why may He not stand in the same Relation, with regard to *justifying Obedience*? There is the same Reason for the one, as for the other. Every Argument in favour of the former, is equally conclusive in behalf of the latter.

Ther. I freely grant, that **CHRIST** was punished in our Stead; that *his* Death is the Expiation of *our* Sin, and our Security from penal Suffering. But this—

Asp.—will undeniably prove, that Sin was imputed to Him; otherwise He could not *truly* suffer in our Stead, nor be *justly* punished at all. “And Imputation is as reasonable and justifiable in *one* Case, as in the *other*; for they both stand upon one and the same Foot; and for that Reason, He who throws down one, throws down both.”—I should by no means have interrupted my *Theron*, were it not to introduce this Answer from an eminent Divine. Who adds, what should be very seriously considered; “And therefore, whoever rejects the Doctrine of the Imputation of our SAVIOUR’s Righteousness to Man, does, by so doing, reject

“ the Imputation of Man’s Sin to our SAVIOUR,
 “ and all the Consequences of it. — Or, in other
 “ Words, He who rejects the Doctrine of the Im-
 “ putation, does, by so doing, reject the Doctrine
 “ of the Expiation likewise *.”

Ther. I know nothing of this Divine; and, eminent as He is, can hardly take his *Ipse dixit* for a Decision.

Assp. I was in hopes, You would pay the greater Regard to his Opinion, because He is not in the Number of the whimsical Fanatics.—However, say I these Things as a Man, or on Man’s Authority alone? Saith not the Law the same also? Speaking of the Peace-offering, the HOLY GHOST has declared; *If any of the Flesh of the Sacrifice of his Peace-offerings be eaten at all on the third Day, it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto Him that offereth it †.* Hence We learn, That Sacrifices and Offerings, when duly administered, were imputed to the Offerer. Imputed to Him, for Reconciliation and Peace with GOD. And wherefore? Because, they were Figures of CHRIST, of his Atonement and Righteousness. Which, in like manner, are imputed to Sinners, for their Pardon and Salvation.

Lest you should think this Proof, being deduced from typical Usages, not sufficiently conclusive—I would farther observe; That the Imputation of

CHRIST’S

* STAYNOE upon Salvation by JESUS CHRIST alone, Vol. I. p. 334.—Where the Reader may find several weighty Considerations, clearly proposed and strongly urged, for the Explanation and Establishment of this capital Doctrine.

† Levit. vii. 18.

CHRIST's Righteousness, bears an evident Analogy to another great and acknowledged Truth of Religion. We did not personally commit Adam's Sin, yet are We chargeable with Guilt, and liable to Condemnation, on that—

Ther. How! We chargeable with Guilt, and liable to Condemnation, on Account of Adam's Transgression! This an acknowledged Truth? No; it is a Position I must deny; I had almost said, which I cannot but abhor. None other could, in the Eye of Justice and Equity, be blameable for any Offence of our first Parents, but *they only*.

Asp. So says *Theron*; but what says *St. Paul*? Yours may be the Voice of natural Reason, but what is the Language of divine Revelation? *In whom, that is in Adam, all have sinned.*

Ther. The Words, if I remember right, are—*For that all have sinned.* Is it possible, that *Aspasio* should forge the Hand, or counterfeit the Seal of the HOLY GHOST, in order to establish a favourite Notion?

Asp. Impossible, I hope.—In the Margin, the Words are translated, as I have repeated them. For this Interpretation I might contend, as not at all incompatible with the original Phrase*, and as most precisely suitable to the sacred Argument. Εφ' ὅτι πάντες ἥμαρτοῦν. In these Words, the Apostle assigns a Reason for the preceding Assertion, *By one Man's Sin Death came upon all.*—It might be replied; Is

* *Rom. v. 12.* Not to mention the famous Distinction of *Epictetus*, τὰ ἐφ' ἡμῶν, nor the well-known Adage of *Hesiod*, πᾶσι δ' ἡμῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. See *Chap. iv. 18. v. 12.* of this very Epistle. Where the Preposition ἐφ' is used in *Aspasio's* Sense. 61 HY 11331 +

Is not this strange? Is not this unaccountable? No, says our sacred Disputant; We account for it on this Principle, Because *all* have *sinned*.—Which Sinning, if referred to every One's personal Iniquity, would neither clear up the Case, nor establish the Doctrine. The Reasoning would stand thus; "All are liable to Death by the Sin of One, "because all have in their own Conduct transgressed." As this is absolutely inconclusive, the Sentence should, if We would preserve the full Force of the Argument, be translated, *In whom all have sinned*. But I waive this Advantage. Let the Words run into your Mould, and the Translation take your Form. They are equally decisive of the Point in Debate.—They assign the *Reason*, why Death came upon all Men; *Infants* themselves not excepted: *For that*, or *inasmuch as*, all have sinned. How? Not in their own Person. This were utterly impossible. Could the Babe, which received his Breath in the Morning, and resigned it at Noon, be an actual Transgressor? But in that first grand Transgression of our federal Head, even the Infants of a Day have sinned. Which Sin, as it could not be actually committed by them, must, according to the Tenour of the Apostle's Arguing, be imputed to them.

Ther. Pray, what do You mean by that stiff, and to me unintelligible Phrase, *federal Head*?

Ans. I mean what *Milton* celebrates, when He represents the Almighty FATHER, thus addressing his eternal SON.

—*Be Thou in Adam's Room*
The Head of all Mankind, though Adam's Son.

*As in Him perish all Men, so in Thee,
 As from a second Root, shall be restor'd
 As many as are restor'd, without Thee none *.*

I mean what the Apostle teaches, when He calls *CHRIST* the second Man †, and the last Adam ‡.—The second! The last! How? Not in a numerical Sense. Not in Order of Time. But in this Respect—That, as *Adam* was a public Person, and acted in the Stead of all Mankind; so *CHRIST* was a public Person, and acted in Behalf of all his People—That, as *Adam* was the first general Representative of this Kind, *CHRIST* was the second and the last: there never was, and there never will be, any other—That, what they severally did, in this Capacity, was not intended to terminate in themselves, but to affect as many as they respectively represented.—This is St. Paul's Meaning, and on this the Doctrine of Imputation is founded.

Ther. If You build the Doctrine on no other Foundation, than your own particular Sense of the Apostle's Words; perhaps, your Ground may prove sandy, and treacherous to its Trust.

Asp. I build it upon my Sense of the Words, and I deduce it from yours, *Theron*.—But I am far from resting the whole Weight of the Cause upon a single Text. It is established, again and again, in this same Chapter.—Neither do I wonder at the Prejudices, which You and Others may entertain against the Doctrine. It lies quite out of the Road of Reason's Researches. It is among the wonderful Things of GOD's Law. This the inspired Penman foresaw,

* Book III. 285.
 xv. 43.

† 1 Cor. xv. 47.

‡ 1 Cor.

foresaw, and modeled his Discourse accordingly. Like some skilful Engineer, who, though He makes the whole Compass of his Fortification strong, yet bestows *peculiar* and *additional* Strength on those Parts, which He apprehends will be exposed to the fiercest Attack. So the wise, the divinely wise Apostle, has inculcated, and reinculcated, this momentous Point. He has enforced it, with all the Assiduity of Zeal; and confirmed it, by all the Energy of Expression.—*If through the Offence of One, many be dead—The Judgment was by One to Condemnation—By one Man's Offence Death reigned by One **—*By the Offence of One, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation †.*—That there may remain no Possibility, of mistaking his Meaning, or of eluding his Argument, He adds; *By ONE Man's Disobedience MANY were made Sinners ‡.*

Ther. Sin, I am told by a celebrated Expositor, sometimes signifies *Punishment*. He farther informs me, that We may be said to sin in *Adam*, not by the Imputation of his Disobedience to Us, but by becoming obnoxious to those Sufferings which were due to his Sin.

Τὸ ἓνός — διὰ τὸ ἓνός. *Significantissima Repetitio. Ne, Peccata per Singulos patrata videantur potius Mortem pergerisse.* BENJEL. — Οὐκ ἀφιστάς τοῦ ἑνός, ὡς διὰ τὴν σὴν ἰδωτός, Πῶς, ἓνός καλῶς ποιεῖς τὸ Χρῆς ἢ οὐκ ἔστιν ἑνός; ἀντὶ τῆς αὐτῆς ἰδωτός, Πῶς, ἓνός παρακαλεῖς τὸ Ἀδὰμ ἢ οὐκ ἔστιν καλῶς; CHRYSOST. *The Apostle repeats, and can hardly desist from, the Expression ONE. That, if a Jew should ask, How can the World be saved by the Well-Doing of One, or by the Obedience of CHRIST? You may be able to reply, on his own Principles; How could the World be condemned by the Evil-Doing of One, or the Disobedience of Adam?*

† Rom. v. 15, 16, 17, 18.

† Rom. v. 19.

Asp. Then the Apostle's Reasoning will stand in this Form; *Death came upon all Men, for that all have sinned*; that is, "Death came upon all Men, because all have been punished: or, an Obnoxiousness to Punishment came upon all Men, because all are become obnoxious to Punishment." A goodly Strain of Argumentation for an unerring Writer to use.—Surely *Gamaliel's* Pupil would disclaim, much more would *CHRIST's* Ambassador scorn, such weak and unmeaning Chicanery. He mentions Sin and its Punishment; but never so much as hints, that they are intended to signify one and the same Thing. He all along maintains a Distinction between them; represents the former, as the Cause of the latter. *Judgment, Condemnation, Death* are owing to *Sin, Offence, Disobedience*. It is by the Imputation of these, that We become obnoxious to those.

This Account is clear, is natural, and wants no strained Criticisms to support it. This Account demonstrates the Equity of that providential Government, which executes the Sentence of Death, even on those Descendants of *Adam*, who have not *sinned* in their own Persons. It also illustrates the Procedure of that sovereign Grace, which treats as righteous, and intitles to Life, even those Believers in *JESUS*, who have not *obeyed* in their own Persons.—What says our Church? You have a great Veneration for the Church of England, *Theron*.

Ther. I have. But, I fear, my *Aspasio* has neither so honourable an Opinion of her Worship, nor so steady an Adherence to her Constitution. Otherwise, He would not so highly extol those ambitious and canting Hypocrites the Puritans. Who were
the

the most inveterate Enemies of our excellent Establishment, and would have rejoiced in its utter Subversion.

Ass. As to the Puritans *, You will do me the Justice to acknowledge, that I speak only of their *evangelical* Tenets, abstracted from all political Principles.—As to myself, your Fears are friendly, but I trust they are *groundless*. I would only ask; Who are to be deemed the most affectionate and faithful Sons of their sacred Mother?—Those, I presume, who most *cordially* embrace her Doctrines, and most *dutifully* submit to her Precepts. By this Touchstone let my Fidelity be tried. And for an immediate Tryal, be pleased to repeat her Ninth Article.

Ther. I cannot say, that I remember the particular Words of any, though I have often read, and very much approve them all.

Ass.

* As the *Puritans* have been mentioned, once and again, it may, perhaps, be thought necessary, that We should explain the Term; by specifying the Persons, to whom it relates.—It relates to such Authors, as the following.

Dr. Owen, with his correct Judgment, and an immense Fund of Learning.—*Mr. Charnock*, with his masculine Style, and an inexhaustible Vein of Thought.—*Dr. Goodwin*, with Sentiments eminently evangelical; and a most happy Talent at opening, sifting, and displaying the hidden Riches of Scripture.—These, I think, are the *first Three*.

Then comes *Mr. Howe*, nervous and majestic; with all the Powers of Imagery at his Command.—*Dr. Bates*, fluent and polished; with a never-ceasing Store of beautiful Similitudes.—*Mr. Flavel*, fervent and affectionate; with a masterly Hand, at probing the Conscience, and striking the Passions.—*Mr. Caryl*, *Dr. Manton*, *Mr. Post*, with many Others; whose Works will speak for them, ten thousand times better, than the Tongue of Panegyric, or the Pen of Biography.

Assp. I wish You would commit to your Memory, four or five of the most distinguished *. They are a valuable Treasure, and contain the Quintessence of the Gospel.

These are the Words of the Ninth Article. "Original Sin is the Fault and Corruption of every Man, that naturally is ingendered of the Offspring of Adam." It is the Fault, says the pious Bishop *Beveridge*, and therefore We are guilty of it. It is the Corruption also, and therefore We are defiled with it.—Our Homilies have recourse to no such Palliatives, and qualifying Interpretations, as my *Theron's* Expositor uses. One of them affirms point-blank, that "in Adam all Men sinned universally." This seems to be a Paraphrase on the Text, whose Translation You lately controverted.—In what Sense our great poetical Divine understood the sacred Writer, is apparent from the following Words; which are supposed to have been spoken by JEHOVAH himself:

Adam's Crime
Makes guilty all his Sons †.

And from another Passage, where our rebellious Progenitor, bewailing his aggravated Misery, and the extensive Malignity of his Guilt, declares;

In me all
Posterity stands curs'd †.

For my own Part I must confess, That, if the Transmission of original Depravity be granted, I know

* Especially, Articles IX, X, XI, XII, XIII.

† MILTON, Book III. 290. † Book X. 817.

know not how the Imputation of *Adam's* destructive Apostacy can be denied. If We had no Concern in the one, how could We be justly punished with the other?—I say *punished*. For, to lose the primitive Integrity of our Nature, and inherit a depraved Disposition, is at once a most deplorable Calamity, and a most terrible Punishment. — Corruption transmitted, and Sin imputed, seem to be Doctrines *indissolubly* connected. To allow the former, and reject the latter, is, in my Apprehension, to acknowledge the Effect without admitting the Cause.

Ther. To make Us Parties in a Covenant, which We did not agree to, can this be *equitable*? To ruin Us for a Crime, which We never committed, can this be *merciful*? Surely, this is a flagrant Injustice, never to be ascribed to the All-gracious GOD. A diabolical Barbarity, add Some, never to be mentioned without the utmost Detestation.

Ass. I see no Cause for such a tragical Outcry of Barbarity, nor indeed for any Complaint of Injustice. Not to insist upon the Sovereignty of an All-creating GOD, and his unquestionable Right to *do what He will with his own* *; I would only ask—Did He not condescend to transact with Man, not on the Foot of absolute uncontrollable Authority, but in the honourable and endearing Way of a *Covenant*?—Were not the Terms of this Covenant, perfectly easy, and wonderfully gracious? *Wonderfully gracious*: For, they proposed a State of inconceivable and everlasting Felicity † to Creatures, who were intitled to *no* Happiness; had not the least Claim to *any* Good; no, not so much as to the Privilege of Existence. *Perfectly easy*: For, what was the Condition

* Matt. xx. 15.

† Luke x. 28.

Condition on Man's Part? Not any rigorous Act of Duty, not any severe Course of Self-denial, but the free Enjoyment of *Millions* of Blessings and Pleasures, with only the Prohibition of *one* pernicious Indulgence.—Here then is made, on one hand, a Promise of the most *glorious* Reward, that GOD himself could give: and nothing required, on the other, but the *smallest* Expression of Allegiance; that Man himself could wish.—And is this Injustice? Is this Barbarity?

Ther. All this was equitable enough with regard to *Adam*: but why should We be condemned for his Violation of the Covenant?—Or how was such a Constitution of Things gracious, with respect to Us?

Ans. “Why condemned?”—Because, We should have been Partakers of the Benefit and the Glory, if He had persevered in his Duty. To this, I presume, None would object. And if they *would not* to the one, they *ought not* to the other.

You ask farther; “How was such a Constitution of Things gracious, with respect to Us?”—I answer; Because it was the *most likely* Means, to secure the Happiness of Us and all Mankind. Was not *Adam*, of all Persons, by far the best qualified to act as a general Head? He had a Perfection of Knowledge, to discern his true Interest: a Perfection of Holiness, to capacitate Him for Obedience: and a Perfection of Happiness, disposing Him to Perseverance. As None could have more eminent Qualifications, None could have *so many* Obligations. His own Welfare, both bodily and spiritual, was at stake: the eternal Interests of his rising Family, and of his remotest Posterity were depending:

the Lives, the Souls, the *everlasting* All of the whole human Race, were embarked on the single Bottom of his Fidelity. Therefore, the Felicity of every Individual, that should spring from his Loins, was a fresh Moive to Vigilance, an additional Engagement to Duty *.—As *his* Love to his Offspring was more refined, more exalted, more godlike than ours, all these Considerations and Inducements must operate upon Him, in their fullest Scope, and with the strongest Energy.—What an Entrenchment was here, to keep out Disobedience, and ward off Ruin! An Entrenchment, *deep* as Hell; *high* as Heaven; *wide* as the whole Extent of the human Species.

c Here then I may venture to throw the Gauntlet, and challenge the whole World. Let the most penetrating Mind devise a Scheme, so wisely and graciously calculated to *ascertain* the Success of a *probationary* State. If this be impracticable, then must every Mouth be stopped. No Tongue can have the least Reason to complain. I, for my Part, shall think myself obliged to admire the Benignity of my CREATOR's Conduct. And GOD may

justly

* Should any Person imagine Himself more capable of standing than *Adam*, who was endowed with all the Perfections of an innocent, holy, godlike Nature; I think, by this very Imagination, He begins to *fall*; fall into one of the vilest Sins, Pride.—Is any Person ready to suppose, That, from a View to his own particular Salvation, He would continue faithful; when *Adam* was not engaged to Fidelity, from a Regard to his own and the final Happiness of all his Posterity? He seems to be just as wise as the Mariner, who persuades Himself; That, though *ten thousand* Anchors, firm and without a Flaw, could not secure the Ship in a Storm; yet a *single* Anchor, crazy and damaged, might have done it effectually.

justly demand of all intelligent Creatures; *What could have been done more, for the Preservation and Felicity of Mankind, that I have not done* *.

Especially, when to all this We add, That the same Almighty BEING, who appointed *Adam* to be our Representative in the first Covenant, without asking our *actual Consent*; appointed also *CHRIST* to be our Representative in the second Covenant, without staying for our *actual Solicitation*. When We take *this* into the Account, there remains not the least Shadow of Injustice; but Goodness, transcendently rich Goodness, shines forth with the brightest Lustre.

Ther. Goodness, *Aspasio*! This is surprising indeed. Why, if *Adam's* Transgression be laid to our Charge, We are *damnable* Creatures, the very Moment We exist; and are liable to the Torments of Hell, even on account of his Disobedience. To term this Goodness, is the greatest of Paradoxes! To affirm it of the DEITY, is little less than Blasphemy!

Asp. Let Us be calm, my dear Friend, and consider the Case impartially. If it is not a real Truth, I shall be as willing to relinquish it, as Yourself.

Is not Death, eternal Death, the Wages of every Sin? And if of every Sin, then doubtless of *original*. Which is the *Fountain*, from whence all the Streams of actual Iniquity flow; or rather the *Abyss*, from whence all the Torrents pour.—That, which could not be pardoned, but by the Humiliation and Agonies of GOD's adorable SON, may reasonably be supposed to deserve the most dreadful Vengeance. And it is affirmed, by an Authority which You will

P 2 not

* Isai. v. 4.

not dispute; that, “ For original as well as actual
“ Sin, the Offering of *CHRIST* is a Propitiation
“ and Satisfaction *.”

Does not St. *Paul* deliver it, as a Maxim in Divinity? That, *by the Offence of One*, Adam He undoubtedly means, *Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation* †. The Import of the Words, together with the Connection of the Passage, lead Us to understand this of a Condemnation to eternal Misery.—*The Import of the Words*: for, they are doubled ‡, to make them peculiarly strong in their Signification: and each Word, within the Compass of this very Epistle, is used in that awful Latitude of Meaning ||. *The Connection of the Passage*: because, it stands opposed to that Justification which is unto Life. This, We are sure, includes the Idea of an everlasting Duration. And why should its tremendous Counterpart be less extensive?

This Sense is evidently *patronized*, and this Doctrine most peremptorily *asserted*, by our established Church. What says the Book of *Homilies*, when treating of the Miseries consequent upon the Fall?
“ This so great and miserable a Plague, if it had
“ only rested on *Adam*, who first offended, it had
“ been much easier, and might the better have been
“ borne. But it fell not only on Him, but also on
“ his Posterity and Children for ever; so that the
“ whole Brood of *Adam’s* Race should sustain the
“ self-same Fall and Punishment, which their Fore-
“ father by his Offence most justly had deserved §.”
—Left any should misapprehend the Design of our Reformers,

• Article XXXI.

† Rom. v. 18.

‡ *Κατα*

§ TO *κατακρυψα*.

|| Rom. ii. 3. iii. 8. viii. 1.

§ Homily on the Nativity of *CHRIST*.

Reformers, and suppose the Punishment to consist only of some bodily Suffering, or the Loss of Immortality, it is added in the same alarming Discourse; “ Neither *Adam*, nor any of his, had any “ Right or Interest at all in the Kingdom of Heaven; but were become plain Reprobates and “ Castaways, being perpetually damned to the “ everlasting Pains of Hell.”

Left You should imagine, this might be written under a Sally of hasty Zeal, or that tis to be reckoned among the doting Opinions of a credulous Antiquity; let me remind my Friend, That it is engrafted into the *Articles*. Those Articles, which were approved by the Archbishops and Bishops of both Provinces; were ratified by the general Consent of the Clergy; and are, to this Day, the *national Standard* of our Belief. The Ninth Article, beginning with a Description of our depraved Nature, subjoins an Account of its proper Desert; “ In “ every Person born into the World, it deserveth “ GOD’s Wrath and Damnation *.”

P 3

Ther.

* I am surpris’d to see a learned Author, attempting to *sheath* the *Sting* of this awful Denunciation: attempting to prove, that the Words “ do not signify GOD’s “ eternal Wrath, and the Damnation of Hell.”—I shall take no pains to confute, what this Gentleman is pleas’d to advance. I shall leave the Question in the Reader’s own Breast. Let Him discover, if He can, a different Meaning in the Sentence. Unless He has a pretty shrewd Knack at Sophistry, I am perswaded, He will find it a difficult Matter to give *any other* tolerable Turn to the Passage.—Surely, it must be a Reproach to our venerable Mother, if She delivers her Doctrine in Language so *fallacious*, as must necessarily mislead the Generality of her Sons: or in Terms so *abstruse*, as even a good Understanding cannot develop, without some Proficiency in critical

Ther. How miserable then is Man!

Asp. In *Himself* He is miserable beyond Expression. But a Conviction of this Misery is the Beginning of all Happiness. *The Valley of Achor is a Door of Hope* *.

Ther. Explain Yourself, *Aspasio*. You seem to deal very much in the Incomprehensibles.

Asp. Such a Conviction would demonstrate the *absolute Insufficiency* of all human Attainments, and all human Endeavours, to procure Life and Salvation.—For, in case We could perform every Jot and Tittle of the divine Law; offend in no Instance; fall short in no Degree; persevere to the very End; yet this would be no more than our present bounden Duty. Not the least Pittance of Merit could arise from all this. Much less could this be sufficient to expiate original Guilt, or remove the dreadful Entail of the primitive all-destroying Sin.

This, therefore, would most effectually preclude every false Confidence; and *sweep away*, at one Stroke, *every Refuge of Lies* †. It would lay Us under an immediate, indispensable, and happy Necessity, of betaking Ourselves to *CHRIST*.—I say *happy* Necessity; because then We should know, by Experience, what each Part of our *LORD*'s awful yet tender Declaration meaneth; *O Israel! Thou hast destroyed thyself; but in ME is thy Help* †.—We should then find, that as Sin and Misery have abounded through the first *Adam*, Mercy and Grace

critical Legerdemain. Far be it from me, to bring such an *Odium* upon our Church.

* *Hof. ii. 15.* *Achor* signifies *Trouble*.

† *Isai. xxviii. 17.* † *Hof. xiii. 9.*

Grace have *much more abounded* through the second. For, if We were ruined by a Crime, which We committed not; We are recovered by a Righteousness, which We performed not. A Righteousness, infinitely surpassing whatever We could have acquired; even though our Nature had been transmitted to Us, free from any Depravity, and exempt from all Guilt.

Ther. In your Opinion then, and according to your Scheme, *Salve* and a *Regimen* are better than a sound Constitution!

Asp. No, *Theron*. My Opinion is, that none can think Himself aggrieved, or have any Reason to complain, at that grand and beneficent Regulation, which suffers the *glimmering* Taper to be obscured or extinguished, but sheds abroad the *boundless* and *majestic* Beams of Day. And if any Comparison be made between the most perfect human Obedience, and the everlasting divine Righteousness of *CHRIST*, it should be taken from the glimmering Taper and the meridian Sun.

Ther. I cannot persuade myself to admire such mysterious and unaccountable Notions. They must puzzle Some: will offend Others: but cannot edify Any.

Asp. This Point, That *We all died in Adam*; were undone by his Apostacy; cannot puzzle the simplest, if unprejudiced Mind.—Nor will it offend Any, but the proud Philosopher, or the self-righteous Moralist. And I assure You, I should not mention it, much less insist upon it, did it not subserve, and in a very singular Manner, the Purposes of *Edification*. The Doctrine of a REDEEMER, obeying and dying in our Stead, is the very Hinge

and Center of all evangelical Revelations: is the very Life and Soul of all evangelical Blessings. This Doctrine is not a little illustrated, and comes very much recommended, by the Imputation of *Adam's Sin*.

Contraries, You know, cast Light upon, and set off each other. Winter and its severe Cold, make Spring and its chearing Warmth, more sensibly perceived, and more highly pleasing. Such an Influence has the present Subject, with respect to the vicarious Obedience of our *MEDIATOR*. The more clearly We see the *Reality* of the first, the more thoroughly We shall discern the *Expediency*, the *Excellency*, the *Glory* of the last. The more We are humbled under a Conviction of the former, the more We shall covet, or the more We shall triumph in, the Enjoyment of the latter.—The Apostle draws a long Parallel, or rather forms a strong Contrast between them, in the fifth Chapter to the *Romans*. He speaks copiously of *Adam's* Guilt, imputed to all Mankind for Condemnation and Death: that He may speak the more acceptably, the more charmingly of *CHRIST's* Righteousness, imputed to all Believers for Justification and Life. In that *dark Ground*, He well knew, this fairest loveliest Flower of Christianity, appears with *peculiar Beauty*; indeed, with a'l the Beauty of consummate Wisdom, and adorable Benignity.

Ther. It really seems to me a Thing *impossible*, that one Man's Righteousness should be made Another's. Can one Man live by the Soul of Another? Or be learned by the Learning of Another?—Good *Astasio*, never attempt to maintain such palpable

Aburdities. They will expose Christianity to the Scorn of Infidels.

Ass. If Infidels scoff at this comfortable Truth; their Scoffing will be, like all their other Cavils, not the *Voice of Reason*, but the *Clamour of Prejudice*.

My Friend's Objection insinuates, what We never assert; That the Righteousness of *CHRIST* is *transfused* into Believers. Which would, doubtless, be in Fact impossible, as it is in Theory absurd.—But this We disavow, as strenuously as You can oppose. The REDEEMER's Righteousness is made ours, not by *Infusion*, but by *Imputation*. The very Terms We use, may acquit Us from such a ridiculous Charge; as Imputation signifies, “A placing to the Account of One, what “is done or suffered by Another.” Accordingly We believe, That the Righteousness which justifies, abides in *CHRIST*, but is placed to our Account: that *CHRIST*, and *CHRIST* alone, actually performed it: that *CHRIST*, and *CHRIST* alone, personally possesses it: but that performing it in our Stead, and possessing it as our Covenant-head, GOD imputes it to Us—GOD accepts Us for it—accepts Us as much, as if We had, on our own Behalf and in our own Persons, severally fulfilled it.

Though one Man cannot live, be actuated with a Principle of Life, by the Soul of another; yet You must allow, that one Man, nay, that many Men may live, be continued in the Possession of Life, for the Righteousness of another. Or else You must do, what I am sure You abhor—You must charge, with Absurdity and Impossibility, even the Declaration of JEHOVAH himself; *If I find in Sodom fifty*
Righteous

*Righteous within the City, then will I spare all the Place FOR THEIR SAKES *.*

Ther. Not all your Refinements can reconcile me to this uncouth Notion.—The Practice is *unexampled*, and absolutely inconsistent with the Rules of *distributive Justice*.

Assp. Ah! my *Theron*, if We look for Examples of GOD's unbounded Goodness, amongst the puny Proceedings of Men; We shall be led into the most extravagant Misapprehensions. To measure one of the Sparks on your Ring, and fancy We have taken the Dimension of the *Alps* or the *Andes*, would be, in comparison of this Error, a small Mistake. Since, between a brilliant Speck, and a Range of Mountains, there is *some* Proportion: but between human Beneficence, and this heavenly Bounty, there cannot possibly be *any*.—However, the all-condescending CREATOR has been pleased, so to dispense his infinitely rich Grace, that We may find, though nothing parallel in any, nothing correspondent in all Circumstances; yet some *faint* Shadow of its *Manner*, among the Affairs of Mankind. Something, that may perhaps give Us such an Idea of the stupendous Subject, as a *Glow-worm* would give of the Sun's Splendor, in case a Person had never beheld that magnificent Luminary.—This Remark I must intreat You to recollect, whenever I attempt to *elucidate* the Mysteries of the Gospel, by any Occurrences in common Life.

When your worthy Minister was disabled, by a rheumatic Disorder, from attending on the Business of his Function, several of the neighbouring Clergy gave Him their Assistance. Was He not, by this

vicarious

* Gen. xviii. 26.

vicarious Performance of his Office, intitled to all the Profits of his Living?—It seems therefore not so unexampled a Thing, for one Person to act in another's Stead. And when a Service is thus discharged by the *Proxy*, the Benefit may, according to the received Maxims of Mankind, accrue to the *Principal*.—Did not *Jehu's* Descendents, even to the fourth Generation *, reap the Advantage of their great Grandfather's Zeal? Does not the *Duke of ***** enjoy the Honours and Rewards, won by the Sword of a victorious Ancestor?—And may not the whole World of Believers, with equal, with *far greater* Justice, receive Life and Salvation, on Account of their all-deserving SAVIOUR? Especially, since He and They are one mystical Body; represented as such in Scripture, and considered as such by GOD.

No, say You: “this is contrary to the Rules of distributive Justice.”—What is your Idea of a *Surety*? How was the Affair stated, and how were Matters negotiated, with relation to your generous Acquaintance *Philander*? He, You know, was bound for an unfortunate Brother, who lately stepped aside.

Ther. The Debt, by his Brother's absconding, devolved upon *Philander*. He was responsible for all, and obliged to pay the whole Sum.

Asp.

* 2 Kings x. 30. By this Instance—by blessing the *Israelites*, for the Sake of *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*—by shewing Mercy to *Solomon*, and his Posterity, on account of *David* their Father—and by many such Patterns recorded in Scripture; the LORD seems to have constituted a Sign, and to have kept up a Memorial, of his Purpose to save Sinners, by the Deeds and Deserts of Another.

Asp. Was not his Payment *as satisfactory* to the Creditor, as if the Money had been paid in the Debtor's own Person, by the Debtor's own Hand?

Ther. Certainly.

Asp. Was not the Debtor, by this vicarious Payment, released from all Fear of Prosecution, and acquitted from any future Demand on this Score?

Ther. He was.

Asp. Apply this Instance to the Redemption of Sinners by **JESUS CHRIST**: who is, in the sacred Writings, expressly styled **A SURETY***.—If *Phylander's* Act was deemed, in the Estimation of Law, the Act of his Brother; if the Deed of the former was imputed, in point of Advantage, intirely to the latter; why should not the same Effects take place, with regard to the divine Bondfman, and poor insolvent Sinners? Why should *that* be exploded in our System of Divinity, which is universally admitted in our Courts of Justice?

Ther. Obedience and Righteousness are, in the Nature of the Things themselves, *personal* Qualities, and *only* so. Every Man is that only (and can be nothing else) which He is in Himself.

Asp. Righteousness, as *dwelling in Us*, is undoubtedly a personal Quality. Obedience, as *performed by Us*, comes under the same Denomination. But does this supersede the Necessity, or destroy the Existence of imputed Righteousness?—Your first Proposition is ambiguous. Let it speak distinctly; add *inherent* to your Righteousness; and the Sense becomes determinate, but the Argument falls to the Ground.

Ther. Every

* Heb. vi. 22.

“ Every Man is that only (and can be nothing else) which He is in Himself.”—If I had never seen the Bible, I should have yielded my ready Assent to this Proposition. But, when I open the Old Testament, and find it written by the Prophet; *In the LORD shall all the House of Israel be justified* *. When I turn to the New Testament, and hear the Apostle saying; *Ye are complete in HIM, who is the Head of all Principalities and Powers* †; I cannot concur with *Theron*, without contradicting Revelation.—*Israel*, or the true Believer, is said to be justified; and the Foundation of this Blessing is declared to be, not in Himself, but in the LORD. The *Colossians* are said to be complete; which, we are very certain, they were not in themselves; and are expressly assured, they were so in *CHRIST*.—Hence it appears, quite contrary to my Friend’s Assertion, that Sinners both *have* and *are* that in *CHRIST*, which they neither have nor are in themselves. They have, by Imputation, a *Righteousness in CHRIST*; they are, by this imputed Righteousness, *complete* before GOD.

I believe, your Mistake proceeds from neglecting to distinguish between *INHERENT* and *IMPUTED*.—We never suppose; That a profane Person is devout, or an intemperate Person, sober. To live soberly and act devoutly, is *inherent* Righteousness. But We maintain; That the Profane and Intemperate, being convinced of their Iniquity, and betaking themselves to the all-sufficient SAVIOUR for Redemption, are interested in the Merit both of his Life and of his Death. This is *imputed* Righteousness.—We farther affirm; That, though criminal

* Isai. xlv. 25.

† Col. ii. 10.

minal in themselves, they are made righteous in *CHRIST*; and are accepted by *GOD*, for his beloved *SON*'s Sake. This is *Justification* through imputed Righteousness.

Neither is this a precarious or unwarrantable Opinion, but the clear and positive Declaration of Scripture. *He justifieth*, He absolves from Guilt, He treats as righteous—*Whom?* Upright, obedient, sinless Creatures? This were nothing extraordinary—No; but *He justifieth the Ungodly* *, *that believe in the LORD JESUS*. Imputing, as the Ground of this Justification, *their* Trespases to Him, and *his* Righteousness to them. This is divinely gracious indeed!

Ther. I see no Occasion for such *nice* Distinctions, and *metaphysical* Subtilties, in plain popular Divinity. Hard Terms and abstruse Notions, may perplex the Head, but seldom improve the Heart.

Asp. Why then do You oblige Us to make use of them? If some People twist and entangle the Reins, it behoves Others to *clear* them of the Embarrassment, and *replace* them in their due Position.—Many Writers, either from an artful Design, or through a strange Inadvertence, have jumbled and confounded these two very different Ideas. Hence, they have started Objections to our Doctrine, which, the Moment You introduce this obvious Distinction, vanish into Air. They broach a Mistake of their own, and then charge the Absurdity upon Others.

I am no more fond of hard Terms, and abstruse Notions, than my *Theron*. Neither can I think the Instance before Us, is so abstruse and intricate. I am very certain, You are capable of comprehending
much

* Rom. iv. 5.

much higher and nicer Refinements. Therefore, I must once again entreat You to remember the very material Difference, between *inherent* and *imputed* Righteousness. The former, is the Essence of Sanctification; the latter, is the Ground of Justification. By *this*, We are restored to the Favour of GOD; by *that*, We are made meet for his heavenly Kingdom.—Let this Distinction, which is easy, which is scriptural, which is important, take place; and We may for the future dismiss, what you call, the metaphysical Subtilties. Our Disagreement will cease, and our Opinions tally.

Ther. I question that, *Aspasio*. There are other Difficulties to be got over, before I can digest so crude an Opinion.—If we are justified by the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, then the Righteousness which justifies Mankind is *already* wrought out.

Asp. And this You take to be a notorious Falshood. Whereas, I look upon it as a certain and most delightful Truth.—The Righteousness, which justifies sinful Man, was *set on foot*; when GOD sent forth his SON from the Habitation of his Holiness and Glory, to be born of a Woman, and made subject to the Law.—It was *carried on*, through the whole Course of our SAVIOUR's Life; in which He always did such Things, as magnified the Law, and were pleasing to his heavenly FATHER.—It was *completed* at that ever memorable, that grand Period of Time, when the blessed *IMMANUEL* bowed his dying Head; and cried, with a strong triumphant Voice, *IT IS FINISHED*.

If the justifying Righteousness was to be wrought by *Ourselves*, We could never be truly and fully justified till Death; till our Warfare is accomplished,

I and

and our *last* Act of Obedience exerted.—But how uncomfortable is such an Apprehension! And how miserable would it render our Lives!—How contrary is such a Sentiment, to the Determination of the Apostle; *WE ARE justified**! As well as to the Experience of Christians; *WE ARE passed from Death unto Life*†.

Ther. Soothed then with this pleasing Surmise, may not the *Libertine* say to his Soul?—"Soul, take thine Ease in the most indolent Security. All my carnal Appetites, indulge Yourself without Restraint. Conscience, be under no Solicitude to live soberly, righteously, and godly. For the Work is done; all done to my Hands. I am like some fortunate Heir, whose Parents have been successfully industrious; and have left nothing to exercise the Diligence of their surviving Son, but only to possess the Inheritance, and live on Labours not his own."

Ans. The *Libertine*, who only speculates or disputes, may indeed abuse the *Doctrine* of Grace. But the Believer, who is guided and influenced by the *Power* of Grace, will improve it to better Purposes. Where the former only *fluctuates* on the Understanding, such detestable Consequences may ensue. Where the latter *operates* on the Heart, it will always produce very different Effects. Such a Person, from such a Faith, will never be inclined to Inactivity or Licentiousness. No more than our busy Companions, with their humming Notes, and honied Thighs, are, by this bright Sunshine and all these expanded Blossoms, inclined to *sleep away* their Hours in the Hive. You may as soon expect to see these Colonies of the Spring, swarming in
December,

* 1 Cor. vi. 11.

† 1 John v. 20.

December, clinging to an Icicle, or dispersing themselves to gather Honey on the Snow; as to see a truly gracious Man, who is dead to Sin, living any longer therein *.—GOD forbid †! He abhors the very Thought.

Whoever, therefore, so shamefully perverts so sweet and glorious a Doctrine, is a Witness against Himself, that He has neither Lot nor Portion in the inestimable Privilege. Does an Animal suck Poison from the most wholesome Herbs? We are sure, from that infallible Indication, it is the vile Spider, or some envenomed Insect, not the valuable and industrious Bee.

Ther. Truly, *Aspasia*, I know not how to call that Doctrine sweet, much less can I recommend it as wholesome; which renders Repentance, personal Reformation, and inherent Rectitude *needless*. And if your Tenet is once received, all these Duties may fairly be dismissed. So that if the Thing was possible, yet it would be *pernicious*.

Asp. The Prophet was of another Mind: *They shall look on Him, whom they have pierced, and mourn ‡.* Sinners shall look, by Faith, to their crucified LORD: shall see Him fastened with Nails to the cursed Tree; see Him stabbed to the Heart by the bloody Spear. And remembering, that this was the Punishment due to their Provocations; believing, that by this Punishment, they are freed from all penal Sufferings, and intitled to all spiritual Blessings: they shall not be tempted to transgress, but incited to mourn; not play the Profligate, but act the Penitent.—The Apostle exactly agrees with the Prophet; and both are diametrically opposite to my

VOL. I.

Q

Friend;

* Rom. vi. 2.

† Rom. vi. 1, 2.

‡ Zech. xi. 10.

Friend; *The Goodness*, the transcendent and inconceivable Goodness of *GOD* our *SAVIOUR*, instead of diverting from, *leadeth to Repentance* *.

Far from obstructing, it powerfully promotes, *personal Reformation*. For thus saith that all-wise *BEING*, who intimately knows our Frame, and discerns what is most effectual to work upon our Minds; *The Grace of GOD*, which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared; teaching Us, that denying all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, We should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil World †. Grace, You observe, even that gloriously free Grace, which bringeth Salvation to unworthy Creatures, is a Dissuasive of all Vice, and an Encouragement to every Virtue.

As to *inherent Rectitude*, how can that be rendered needless by imputed Righteousness? Is Health rendered insignificant, by the Abundance of our Riches? Does Ease become superfluous, through the Beauty of our Apparel?—Holiness is the *Health* of our Souls, and the *Ease* of our Minds. Whereas, ungovernable Passions create keener Anguish, than a Brood of Vipers gnawing our Bosoms. Inordinate Desires are a more intolerable Nuisance, than Swarms of Locusts infesting our Abodes. To regulate *those*, and to restrain *these*, can never be needless, till Comfort and Sorrow change their Properties; till the diabolical Nature becomes equally desirable with the Divine.

Then, The Believer, indeed, out of mere Generosity, may, if He please, add Works of Righteousness of his own, But his main Interest is secure without them.

Rom. ii. 4.

† Tit. ii. 11, 12.

Ass. Rather, *Theron*, He must out of Duty, He will out of Gratitude, and from the new Disposition of His Nature He cannot but, add to his Faith Works of Righteousness.

How runs the heavenly *Edict*, in this Case made and provided? I will, *That they who have believed in GOD, for Pardon of Sin and Life eternal, be careful to maintain good Works* *. How beats the Pulse of a believing Soul? You may feel it, in that truly generous Demand, made by the *Psalmist*: *What shall I render unto the LORD, for delivering me from impending Death, from deserved Damnation; and for all the Benefits, that He hath done unto me †?* A grateful Heart wants not the Goad, but is a Spur to itself.—How leans the Bias of his Nature? He is new-born; created in *CHRIST JESUS* unto good Works ‡; his Delight is in the Law of the *LORD* ||. Whatever is our supreme Delight, We are sure to prosecute; and prosecute with Ardour. *We cannot but speak the Things which We have seen and heard §*, was the Profession of the Apostles; if

* *Ti. iii. 8.* The original Word *εὐσέβειας* has a Beauty and an Energy, which, I believe, it is impossible for our Language to preserve, by any literal Translation. It implies, That a Believer should not only be exercised in, but eminent for, all good Works: should show Others the Way, and outstrip them in the honourable Race: be both a Pattern, and a Patron of universal Godliness.

† *Psal. cxvi. 12.* ‡ *Eph. ii. 10.* || *Psal. i. 2.* § *Acts. iv. 20.* This is an Expression, used by the Apostles. It describes the genuine and habitual Propensity of their new Nature. As the compassionate Bowels cannot but yearn at Spectacles of Misery; as the benevolent Heart cannot but dilate with Pleasure, at the Sight of a Brother's Happiness: so the new Crea-

if applied to practical Godliness, it is the Experience of the *Christian*.

Not can his main Interest be secure without a holy Obedience. Because, the Judge of the World, at the Day of eternal Retribution, will declare to the Workers of Iniquity; *I never knew You; depart from me* *. Because Holiness, though not the Cause of our Admittance to the beatific Vision; is so necessary a Qualification, that *without it no Man shall see the LORD* †. Without it, there is no Access to Heaven, neither could there be any Enjoyment in Heaven.

Ther. Pray, recollect Yourself, *Aspasio*. According to the Tenour of your own Illustration, the Necessity of *personal* Obedience is evidently vacated. For, how can the Law demand a Debt of the Principal, which has been fully discharged by the Surety? Does not such a Doctrine supply Consequences, very hurtful to Piety and Virtue?

Asp. The Debt of penal Suffering, and the Debt of perfect Obedience, are fully discharged by our Divine SURETY. So that We are no longer under a Necessity of obeying, in order to obtain an Exemption from Punishment, or to lay the Foundation for our final Acceptance. We are nevertheless engaged, by many other Obligations, to walk in all dutiful and conscientious Regard to the Law.

The *Levites* were a Type of *CHRIST*. The *Levites*, saith the holy One of *Israel*, shall do the Service

ture in *CHRIST*, cannot but desire to glorify, and do right to obey, the ever-blessed *GOD*.

* Matt. vii. 23.

† Heb. xii. 14.

*Service of the Congregation, and bear their Iniquities *.*
 —Do the sacred Service, whereby the People were accepted before GOD—*Bear their several Iniquities,* whereby they obtained Remission of Sins.—*Israel,* you see, by Means of the *Levites* and their Ministrations, were made Partakers of Pardon, of Peace, and the divine Favour. This is undeniable. But did this vacate the Necessity of their personal Obedience? Could this supply Consequences very hurtful, or in any Degree hurtful, to their Piety and Virtue?—Where then was the Wisdom of the Law-giver? What a Reflection this on the Author of such an Institution? Either HE could not be wise and holy, or else this Charge must be false and groundless.

Ther. Many other Obligations, You say. Instance in some, and demonstrate the Charge to be groundless.

Asp. Obedience, personal Obedience, is necessary, because—this is the most authentic Proof of our Love to the gracious REDEEMER; *If Ye love me, keep my Commandments* †—this is a comfortable Evidence of our Union with that exalted Head; *He that abideth in Me, and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much Fruit* †—this is also the most effectual Method, of adorning our Profession; and of winning our Neighbours, to embrace the Gospel. *Let your Light, the Light of your exemplary Conversation, not only appear, but shine before Men: that they, seeing your good Works, may think honourably of your Religion* ||. *May glorify your FATHER,*

Q 3

Numb. xviii. 23. † John xiv. 15. † John xv. 5.

|| *Matt. v. 16.* Therefore, by our LORD in this Place, and by St. Paul in his Epistle to *Titus*, good Works are called *Kala opsa, graceful, beautiful, ornamental.*

which is in Heaven; and say, with those Profelytes mentioned by the Prophet, *We will go with you.*

Are not these Obligations?—Real Obligations? Obligations, whose Reality will never be disputed, whose Force must always be felt, by the true Believer.—*Do we then make void the Law*, through an imputed Righteousness? No, verily: but—if Gratitude to the crucified *JESUS*, have any constraining Influence; if a Concern for our own Comfort and Happiness have any persuasive Energy; if there be any Thing inviting, any Thing desirable, in the Prospect of honouring *GOD*, and edifying Man—we *establish the Law*. By all these generous, manly, endearing Motives, We enforce its Precepts, and provide for its Observance.

Ther. Should We admit this Doctrine, Mankind could no longer be considered as in themselves, and solely in themselves *accountable* Creatures. Nor would the future Judgment be an *equitable* Distribution of Rewards and Punishments; but only *GOD's* awful and uncontrollable Execution of his own arbitrary and irreversible Decrees.

Ans. I have never been accustomed to consider Mankind, under the Gospel Dispensation, as accountable *solely* in themselves. Because, in this comfortable and benign Scheme, a *MEDIATOR* intervenes; undertakes to answer for his People; and bears the *Chastisement of their Peace*.—Were We accountable solely in Ourselves, *CHRIST* as our great *HIGH-PRIEST*, would be set aside; and his Sacrifice, as a Propitiation for Sin, be of none Effect.

Why may not the future Judgment, be an equitable Distribution of Rewards and Punishments? If those,

those, who reject the Atonement of the dying *JESUS*, and refuse to depend on his consummate Righteousness, are left to stand or fall, according to the Issue of their own Obedience. If Believers, on the other hand, are accepted through their most meritorious *REDEEMER*; but rewarded with higher or inferior Degrees of Felicity, in Proportion to the Sanctity of their Nature, and Usefulness of their Lives.—I see nothing arbitrary in this Procedure; but an admirable Mixture of just Severity, and free Goodness—On those, who reject the Atonement, *just Severity*—To those, who rely on their *SAVIOUR*, *free Goodness*.

Ther. The Obedience of *CHRIST* was wholly due for Himself; and therefore could not merit for Another.

Assp. A bold Assertion this! Whoever can make it good, will infallibly overthrow my Opinion; and absolutely destroy my Hopes. But surely, *Theron*, it is not your real Sentiment.

Could it then be Matter of Duty in the eternal *SON*, to be born of a Woman; and in the *LORD* of Lords, to become the Servant of all? Could it be Matter of Duty in the *KING* of Glory, to embrace the Infamy of the Cross; and in the *PRINCE* of Life, to pour out his Soul unto Death?—If all this was Matter of Duty, the ever-blessed *JESUS* (How shall I speak it? Who can believe it?) was no better than an *unprofitable* Servant*. For, such is the acknowledged Character of One, who does no more, than—

Ther. Not so fast, nor quite so vehement, my Friend. Remember what the Scripture affirms.

Q 4

CHRIST

* Luke xvii. 10.

CHRIST is there said to receive a *Commandment*, and be *subject* to the Law. Both which Expressions imply Obligation and Duty.

App. In order to accomplish our Redemption, the **SON** of **GOD** submitted Himself to the Commandment. But this was his own *spontaneous* Act. The Matter of his *free* Choice. To which He lay under no Obligation, till He engaged to become our Surety.

Being in the Form of GOD, He was Lord of the Law; and no more subject to its Commands, than obnoxious to its Curse. Nevertheless, *He took upon Him the Form of a Servant*; and was made under the Law.—Wherefore? Because it was his bounden Duty, to put his Neck under the Yoke *? Impossible to imagine!—Or, that *He might* obtain everlasting Life and Glory for Himself? No such Thing. But that He might *redeem those who were under the Law* †. From which it appears, that both his Engagement and his Obedience were, not for Himself, but for his People.—Therefore the Prophet cries out, with holy Exultation; *To Us a Child is born; To Us a Son is given* ‡! His incarnate State and human Nature, together with all that He did and suffered in both, were for Us: *those* assumed on our Account, *these* referred to our Advantage.

Let Us consider this, and be amazed! and be charmed!—The great universal **LORD** vouchsafes to pay universal Obedience! What *Condescen-*

son

* Acts xv. 10. † Gal. iv. 5.

‡ *Mat. ix. 6. Est præterea Emphasis singularis in Voc nobis. Significat id, quod omnes sentiunt, nostro Bono & Commundo natum esse hunc Puerum Imperatorem. VITRING.*

The Original is, not *for Himself*, but *for Us*, and our Good: for Us Men, and our Salvation.

son was Here!—He vouchsafes to pay it, for Us Men, and for our Redemption! What Goodness was this!

Ther. Before We indulge the devotional Strain, We should take care that our Devotion is founded on rational Principles. Otherwise it may prove, not like the Fire on the Altar, which was *always* burning, and never went out; but like the Flash of a Sky-rocket, which glitters one Moment, and is extinguished the next.—Suppose I should say; All this Obedience was necessary in *CHRIST*, as a qualifying Condition for the Priestly Office; and in order to confer Merit, on the Sacrifice of his Death.

Ass. This You are welcome to say. But I hope, You will not, like a certain Acquaintance of ours, be determined never to unsay or retract, what You have once affirmed.—You will please to remember, That there was no need of any such qualifying Condition: the Dignity of our LORD's Person, being, of itself, sufficient to render his Sacrifice infinitely satisfactory, and infinitely meritorious.

Hence it will appear, that, for every Thing advanced upon this Subject, We have a solid Foundation, in Reason, as well as in Scripture.—Scripture teaches Us, that the Man *CHRIST JESUS*, was united to the second Person of the eternal TRINITY.—Reason assures Us, that, by Virtue of this Union, He must have an unquestionable Right to everlasting Life and Glory. If so, He could be under no Necessity of obeying, in order to procure either Honour or Happiness for Himself.—Therefore, all that He performed, in Conformity to the preceptive Part of the Law, He performed

under the Character of a *public Person*: in the Place, and for the Benefit of his spiritual Seed. That they might be interested in it, and justified by it.

Ther. Be it so: the Believer is interested in *CHRIST's* Righteousness.—Pray, is He interested in all, or only in Part?—If in *all*, then every Believer is equally righteous, and equally to be rewarded. Which is contrary to an allowed Maxim, That there will be different Allotments of Happiness in the heavenly World.—If in *Part* only, how will You ascertain the Degree? What Proportion belongs to this Person, and what to the other?—Either Way, your Scheme is inextricably embarrassed.

Asp. The Reply to my *Theron's* Enquiry, is easy; and the Embarrassment He mentions, is but imaginary.—Every true Believer is interested in *all CHRIST's* Righteousness; in the *whole* Merit of his spotless Nature, of his perfect Obedience, and expiatory Death. “*Is CHRIST divided?*” Said “a holy Person in his last Moments. No; I have “the whole of his Righteousness. *All that He* did, “all that He suffered for the Redemption of Sinners, is mine.”

You are a great Admirer of Anatomy, *Theron*, and must undoubtedly remember the very peculiar Structure of the *Ear*. Other Parts of the Body are progressive in their Growth. Their Bulk is proportioned to the infantile, or manly Age. But the Organs of Hearing, I have been informed, are *precisely* of the *same* Size, in the feeble Infant, and the confirmed Adult.—Justification likewise, being absolutely necessary to a State of Acceptance with *GOD*, is, in every Stage of the Christian Course, and

and even in the first Dawn of sincere Faith, complete. With regard to the *Existence* of the Privilege, there is no Difference * in the Babes, the young Men, the Fathers in *CHRIST*. The *Perception*, the *Assurance*, the comfortable *Enjoyment* of the Benefit, may increase. But the Benefit itself is incapable of Augmentation.

The various Advances in Sanctification, account for the *various Degrees* of future Glory. Not account for them only, but render them entirely reasonable; and, according to our Apprehension of Things, unavoidable. Even as they seem perfectly agreeable, to the Representations of the Gospel †.— As to settling the *Proportion*, We may safely leave that to the Supreme ARBITRATOR. He, who *meteth out the Heavens with a Span*, and *setteth a Compass upon the Face of the Deep*, cannot be at a loss to adjust this Particular.

Ther. The Organs of Hearing, though not precisely, are *very nearly*, of the same Bulk, in the Babe and the Man. They acquire, from advancing Years,

* To the same Purpose speaks one of our most celebrated Divines; as great an Adept in sacred Literature, as Ages have produced.—“ All are justified *alike*: the *Truth* of Faith justifying, not the *Measure*. Justification therefore is the same in All that believe: though their Belief be in different Degrees. So, once in the Wilderness, all gathered not Manna in the same Measure; yet, when all came to measure, they had all *alike*; none above an Omer, none under.”

LIGHTFOOT, Vol. II. p. 1052.

† See *Dan.* xii. 3. *1 Cor.* iii. 8. *2 Cor.* ix. 6. *Luke* xix. 12, 13, &c. Where the Servant, that gained five Pounds, is made Ruler over five Cities; while another, who acquired double the Sum, is promoted to double Honour.

Years, scarce any Thing more than an Increase of Solidity. So that I make no Objection to your Illustration, but only to your Doctrine.

IF CHRIST has done all, and we are entitled to his whole Merits only by believing; to be saved, must be the *easiest* Thing in the World. Whereas, the Bible represents Christianity, as a *Race* and a *Warfare*, a State of Conflict and a Course of Striving.—In good Truth, *Aspasio*, You prophesy pleasing Things. Divinity is not your Profession; or else, I should number You among “the smooth, emollient, downy Doctors.” For, according to the Articles of your Creed, there is no more Difficulty in acquiring Heaven and Salvation, than in rising from our Seat.

Asp. If We consider the Enjoyment of Heaven, in a legal View; if We regard it, as an *Acquisition* to be made by Ourselves; it will then be, I say not extremely difficult, but absolutely impossible. Whereas, if We consider it in the Evangelical Light; if We regard it, as the *Gift* of GOD; it is then attended with no other Difficulty, than that which consists in believing the Report, and receiving the Grace of the Gospel.—*To believe*, is certainly a most easy Thing in itself; and would be equally easy to Us, were not our Minds darkened and enfeebled by the Corruption of Nature, assaulted and embarrassed by the Temptations of Satan *. On Account of these Impediments, We often find the Duty of Believing accompanied with Difficulties; with many and great Difficulties; such as will abundantly justify the Language of the Apostle, when

* See Marshall's Gospel-Mystery of Sanctification. Edit. 6. pag. 203, &c.

when He speaks of *Fighting the good Fight* *, and *running the Race* † of Faith.

A Sinner, seeking for Heaven and Salvation, I would not compare to an active Gentleman rising from his Seat; but rather to a *ship-wrecked Mariner*, labouring to gain some Place of Safety.—He espies a large *Rock*, which rears its Head above the boisterous Flood. To this He bears away, and to this He approaches: but, whirling Winds, and dashing Waves, drive Him back to an unhappy Distance.—Exerting all his Strength, He advances nearer still; and attempts to climb the desirable Eminence. When, a sweeping Surge interposes, and drenches Him in the rolling Deep.—By determined Efforts, He recovers the Space He had lost. Now, He fastens on the Cliff, and has almost escaped the Danger. But, there is such a Numbness in his Limbs, that He cannot maintain his Hold; and such an impetuous Swell in the Ocean, that He is once more dislodged, and plunged afresh into the raging Billows.—What can He do? His Life, his precious Life, is at stake. He must renew, still renew, and never intermit his Endeavours.—Neither let Him abandon Himself to Despair. The MASTER sees Him, amidst all his fruitless Toil. Let Him cry earnestly; *LORD, save me! I perish!* And HE, who commandeth the Winds and the Waves, will put forth his beneficent Hand; will rescue Him from the devouring Sea; and set his Feet upon the Rock. Enabling him to believe, to the Salvation of his Soul.

Such, my Friend, so painful, so assiduous, are frequently the Conflicts of an awakened Sinner; before
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* 1 Tim. vi. 12.

† Heb. xii. 1, 2.

it is given Him * to rest, in peaceful Security, on the *Rock of Ages*, *CHRIST JESUS*. Of this You may, some Time or other, be assured, not only from my Lips, but from your own Experience.

Ther. What may happen in some future Period of Time, is beyond my Power to foresee. At present, I am apt to think, We must put a stop to the theological Lecture. Don't You remember our Engagement with *Altinous*? And You will own, that Punctuality in performing our Promises, is at least a *moral Virtue*, if it be not a *christian Grace*.

• Phil. i. 29.



DIA



DIALOGUE VI.



SPASIO's Affairs called Him to *London*. He staid in Town a few Days. But as soon as Business was finished, he quitted the City, and hastened to his Friend's *Country-seat*.—Upon his Arrival, He found some agreeable Company, who came on purpose to spend an Evening with the Family. This Incident, gave a Respite from Controversy, and prevented the immediate Prosecution of their Debate.—As the next Morning proved misty, and unfit for walking abroad, *Theron* invited *Aspasio* to pass an Hour in his *Study*.

It was situate at the Extremity of a large Gallery: which, while it conducted the Feet to a Repository of Learning, interposed between the Ear, and all the Disturbance of domestic Affairs. So that You are accommodated with every Thing, that may regale a studious Mind; and incommoded with nothing, that may interrupt a sedate Attention.—*Aspasio* readily consented to the Proposal; but desired, first, to take a Turn in this beautiful *Oblong*, and divert Himself with the Decorations of the Place.

Ass. A very short Survey, *Theron*, is sufficient to discover the Correctness of your Judgment, and the true Delicacy of your Taste.—Here, are no *impertinent* and *frivolous* Exhibitions, of romantic Tales, or poetic Stories. Here, are no *indecent* Pieces of Imagery, that tend to corrupt a chaste, or inflame a wanton Fancy.—On the contrary, I am presented with a Collection of Maps, accurately drawn by the most able Hands; and with several remarkable Transactions of Antiquity, most eloquently told in the Language of the Pencil.—You have happily hit that grand Point, which the Gentleman of Refinement, as well as the Author of Genius, should ever keep in his View—The Union of the *Beneficial* with the *Delightful* *.

Ther. Indeed, my *Aspasio*, I have often been disappointed, sometimes even shocked, in the Gardens, the Porticos, and the Walks of some modern *Virtuosi*. Their Pourtraits and Statues are little else, but an Assemblage of elaborate Trifles. *Ixion* stretched upon the Wheel, or *Phaeton* precipitated from the Chariot. *Apollo* stringing his Lyre, or *Jupiter* (I beg his supreme Highness's Pardon, for not giving Him the Precedence in my Catalogue) bestriding his Eagle, and balancing his Bolts.—Pray, where is the Advantage of being introduced to this *fabulous* Tribe of Gentry? What noble Idea can they awaken, or what valuable Impression leave upon the Mind? The best We can say of such Performances, is, That they are Limning and Sculpture expensively thrown away.

This

• *Omne tulit Punctum, qui miscuit Utile Dulci.* HOR.

This celebrated Trumpery, One can bear with, however. But, when the Painting and Sculpture, instead of cultivating Virtue, and improving our Morals, are calculated to be the very *Bane* of both—will You call *this* an elegant Entertainment? No: 'tis a Nuisance. 'Tis a Pest.—In the *Statues*, I grant, every Dimple sinks, and every Muscle swells, with the exactest Propriety. The Countenance is animated with Life, and the Limbs are ready to start into Motion.—The *Picture*, I am sensible, is as highly finished as the Effigy. The Distributions of Light and Shade most artfully adjusted. The Diminutions of the Perspective true to a Nicety. Nor can any Thing exceed the easy Flow of the Robe, unless it be the graceful Attitude, and almost speaking Aspect, of the principal Figure.—But, is this *masterly* Execution an Equivalent for the most *malignant* Effects? For sullyng the Purity of my Fancy, and poisoning the Powers of my Imagination?

Is it an Indication of the Owner's *judicious* Taste, to prefer Regularity of Features in the hammered Block, before orderly and harmonious Affections in his own Breast? Does it bespeak a *refined* Disposition, or a *benevolent* Temper, to be so extravagantly enamoured with the Touches of a lascivious Pencil; as to expose them in the most frequented Passages, and obtrude them on every unwary Guest?—Surely, this can create no very advantageous Opinion of a Gentleman's *intellectual* Discernment. Much less can it raise an amiable Idea of his *moral* Character *. On such

* 'Tis Pity, but the Advice of *Cicero*, (that great Master of elegant Taste, and polite Manners) was received
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such Occasions, I am strongly tempted to suspect, That real Honour is a Stranger, where common Decency * is wanting.

As for the Artist, One can hardly forbear execrating his hateful Folly, who could *prostitute* such fine Talents to such infamous Purposes.—Detested be the Chizzel! that teaches, though with inimitable Dexterity, the cold obdurate Marble to enkindle dissolute Affections.—Abhorred be the Pencil! that makes no other Use of the most lovely Colours, than to pollute the Canvass, and ensnare the Spectator.

It is argued, I know, that many of those Pieces are the completest Models extant.—An *everlasting Reproach* this to the Art: but no Apology for the Performances. Since, the more nicely they are executed, the more mischievous † is their Influence. It strikes

as a *Standard of Regulation*, by all our Connoisseurs in the fine Arts. *In primis provideat, ne Ornamenta Ædium atque Hortorum Vitium aliquod indicent inesse Moribus. De Offic.*

* A Gentleman, observing some gross Indelicacies of this Kind, at the Seat of a Person of Distinction, very acutely (and, I believe, too justly) said;

His Paintings are the Gibbet of his Name.

† I hope, it will not be thought improper; I wish, it was entirely needless; to animadvert upon a Practice, which is, not only a Reproach to our *Christian Profession*, but an Insult upon *national Decorum*. The Practice of exposing to public View, and offering to public Sale, such shameful *Prints*; as are fitted only to awaken licentious Desires, and cherish the most profligate Dispositions.

Such Spectacles are a Species of the *rankest* Poison. And can the Poison be less pernicious, because it is received at the Eye, instead of passing through the Lips? Because it tends *more immediately* to debauch the Morals,

strikes the furer, and sinks the deeper. It dresses Destruction gay, and paves with Beauty the Way to Ruin.

It is my chief Ambition, *Aspasio*, to have all my Decorations so circumstanced, that the Beholder may learn some *valuable Precept* in Morality, or be reminded of some *important Event* in History: may find, even in the Scenes of his Amusement, something to establish his Virtue, or enlarge his Knowledge.

I frequently entertain my eldest Son, who is reading the *Greek* and *Latin* Historians, with an Explanation of my principal Drawings. That he may behold in Colouring, what He has perused in Nar-

R 2

rative.

and *but remotely* to destroy the Constitution?—No Wonder, so many of our Youths are corrupted, and so many Robberies committed; while such Scenes of pictured Lewdness are suffered to inflame them with Lust, and habituate them to Impudence.

Another very indecent Custom has unaccountably stole its way, into several Performances of Genius and Elegance. The Custom, I mean, of representing the *Muses*, the *Graces*, and other romantic Personages, in the Form of beautiful Ladies, partly, if not entirely, naked.—'Tis true, here are no loose Adventures; no immodest Gestures; nay more, the Artist expresses *his own*, and consults *our* Modesty, by presenting us with a Position in Profile, by the Intervention of a Foliage, or the Lappet of a Robe.—But let me ask the ingenious Operator, If He would choose to introduce his Wife or his Daughter, in *such* a Manner, to public Company?—Is He startled at the Question? Is He shocked at the Thought? Then, let Him reflect, and let Others consider, Whether *that* can be graceful or allowable in a Picture, which would be brutal and unsufferable in common Life?

Socrates (who, before his Application to Philosophy, practised as a Statuary) could not but blush at this Abuse of his Art. And, being to form a Representation of the *Graces*, He represented them properly *habited*.

relative.—At this Instant, the Youth happened to make his Appearance; paying his Respects to *Aspasio*, and dutifully saluting his Father.—It just recurs to my Memory, said *Theron*, that some necessary Affairs of the Family, require my Attendance for a few Minutes. Will You excuse my Absence, good *Aspasio*; and permit my Son to supply my Place?

You will very much oblige me, by leaving me such a Companion.—Come, my dear Sir, addressing Himself to *Eugenio*; as I know You are a Lover of Learning, what think You of diverting Ourselves with these agreeable Books? Which give Us their instructive Lessons, not in puzzling Languages, but in pleasing Colours.—*Eugenio* spoke his Consent, and expressed his Modesty in a becoming Blush.—While *Aspasio* proceeded—

Asp. This is a striking Picture indeed! Hills piled on Hills form a most astonishing Prospect. What horrible Magnificence reigns amidst those Rocks and Snows! Nature seems to have designed them for the Boundaries of the World. Yet those daring Troops are attempting to burst the prodigious Barrier. Who are they, *Eugenio*, and whom shall We call their Leader?

Eug. This, Sir, is the famous *Hannibal*, heading and encouraging his Army in the Passage of the *Alps*. The Sons of *Africa* seem to shiver with Cold, as they traverse those frozen Regions, and march among the Clouds.

Asp. 'Tis the very same. Some, You observe, climb, with excessive Toil, the steep and craggy Cliffs. Others, with far greater Difficulty, descend

scend through dreadful Declivities of Ice; exposed all the while, to the Arrows of the Mountaineers.—Some, endeavouring to avoid the Showers of Steel, slip with their Feet, and tumble headlong down the vast projecting Promontories. See! from what a Height they are falling! Carriages and their Drivers, the Horse and his Rider! And at what a Distance still, from the stony Abyfs below!—Some lie, with closed Eyelids, and ghastly Features, dashed to death at the Bottom. Others, writhing with the Torture of mangled Limbs, and broken Bones, lift up an agonizing Look to their Comrades.—Their Comrades, insensible of a Brother's Misery, and wholly intent upon their own Security, hang in frightful Elevation on the very Edges of the Precipice. The Precipice seems to totter, as they cling; and the alarmed Spectator expects, every Moment, a hideous Downfal.—Are You not startled at the View, *Eugenio*, and in pain for the hardy Adventurers?

Eug. I am, Sir. And I wonder, how they will extricate themselves from these perilous Circumstances. I have read in *Livy*, that they cut their Way through the Rocks, after they had softened them with *Vinegar*. But is this probable? Be the Fluid ever so corroding, how could they procure a sufficient Quantity of it, amidst those desolate Mountains?

Asp. I believe, their *Resolution* and their *Perseverance*, were the *Vinegar*. These open a Road through Rocks. These, under the Conduct of Prudence, and the Favour of Heaven *, surmount all Obstacles.

Influenced

* Under the *Favour of Heaven* — I cannot but wish, that the Relator of *Lord Anson's Voyage round the World*,
R 3
had

Influenced by these, the Survivors press boldly on; and are determined to vanquish the Horrors of Nature, as a Prelude to their Victory over the Forces of *Rome*. Let these, Resolution and Perseverance I mean, be the Companions of my *Eugenio's* youthful Studies, and they will enable Him also to conquer Difficulties—even all the Difficulties, which lie in his Way to Learning.

What

had anticipated *Aspasio's* Remark. Had made some grateful Acknowledgments to an interposing PROVIDENCE, in that masculine, nervous, noble Narrative.—A Narrative of such signal Deliverances, so critically timed, and so surprisngly circumstanced; as, in the Course of *one* Expedition, are scarcely to be paralleled.

I am persuaded, it would have been no Disparagement of the great Commander, and his gallant Officers; to have it thankfully recognized, on some very unexpected, yet most advantageous Turn of Affairs, THIS HATH GOD DONE!—Neither could it have detracted from the Merit of the brave Sailors, to have confessed, on many hazardous Emergencies; That all their Resolution, all their Address, and the Exertion of their utmost Abilities, had been only *lost Labour*, without the remarkable Co-operation of Divine Goodness.—And I am apprehensive, that it must considerably diminish the Delight of many Readers, to observe the blessed AUTHOR of all these Mercies, passed by unnoticed, unacknowledged, and without any Share of the Praise.

The Sarcasm on Pope *Adrian* the Sixth, would, I fear, be too applicable on this Occasion. Being advanced to the Pontifical Chair, He built a College at *Louvain*; and caused the following Account of his Rise and Preferments, to be inscribed over the Gate; *Trajectum plantavit, Louvanium rigavit, Cæsar Incrementum dedit. Utrecht planted; Louvain watered; the Emperor gave the Increase.* Under which, some impartial Hand, to rebuke the Ungodliness and Vanity of the Pontiff, added; *Hic DEUS nihil fecit. In all this, GOD and his Providence had nothing to do!*

What is our next Draught? At each End We have a Group of living Figures. All the intermediate Space is an extensive Tract of Land, diversified only by rapid Rivers, horrid Defarts, and mountainous Ridges; with here and there a few savage Natives, in uncouth Dresses, and formidable Arms.—It is more like a *Map*, than a *Picture*. And the most remarkable Beauty is, the *aerial Perspective*. Which puts a very agreeable Cheat upon our Eyes; causing Us to behold, on an Ell of Canvass, the Space of many Hundreds of Miles.

Eug. This represents *The Retreat of the Ten Thousand Greeks*. First We behold them in the Plains of *Media*; at an immense Distance from their native Country; without Guides; without Provision; and, what is the most desperate Calamity of all, deprived of their ablest Officers by Treachery and Murder.—Well may they look dejected. How have I pitied their Case, as I read their Story! Abhorred the Perfidy of their Enemies, and wished them all Success in their hazardous Enterprize!

Asp. Don't you perceive, their drooping Spirits begin to revive, and some Gleam of Hope diffuses itself through their Countenances, while they listen to the eloquent *Xenophon*? Who stands conspicuous in the Midst, haranguing his Soldiers, and rousing their Courage. But, Ah! what a vast Extent of unknown Climes must they traverse, with a numerous and victorious Army, harassing them in Flank, or hanging upon their Rear! What Fatigues must they sustain, what Hardships endure, before they arrive at their wished-for Home! — *Home!* Fired by the enchanting Name, and animated by their brave philosophic Leader, they resolve to push

their Way through all the Extremes of Peril and of Pain. To scatter, with their little Band, the incircling Millions of *Barbarians*, is the smallest of their Achievements. They cross Rivers, they scale Rocks, whose slippery Banks, and craggy Summits, are lined with opposing Nations. They wade through Desarts of Snow; and pass over inhospitable Mountains, the far more dreaded Abodes of *Desolation*, *Drought*, and *Famine*. They encounter the Keeness of the northern Storm, and all the Rigour of the most malignant Seasons.—As some of these Articles are incapable of being expressed by the Pencil, the Artist remits Us to the Historian; and has contented Himself, with marking out the most distinguished Stages of this memorable Expedition. Only We view the courageous Itinerants, once again, on a pretty lofty Eminence. There they appear, not with their former Dejection, but in all the Transports of Joy.

Eug. This, Sir, is the Mountain *Tecqua*. From whence they had the first View of the Sea, and the first Dawn of Safety. There they embrace one another, and extol their Commanders, especially the noble *Xenophon*. Whose History, filled with great Exploits and extraordinary Events, turns my Task into a Pleasure; and his manly yet benign Aspect, strangely attracts my Esteem. Methinks, under such a General, I could have been willing to take my Share, in all the Toil, and all the Hazards of the Expedition.

Asp. Would my *Eugenio*? Then I will lift Him under a Captain, unspeakably more accomplished and beneficent. Young as You are, You shall, from this Hour, commence a Soldier and a Traveler.

A *Soldier*, to fight against Sin, and every Temptation. A *Traveler*, to pass through the Wilderness of this World, unto the Land of everlasting Rest.— Though your Enemies may be numerous, and your Journey tedious, yet faint not, neither be discouraged. The LORD of Heaven is your Protector and Guide; Heaven itself shall be your exceeding great Reward. When You arrive at those happy Abodes, your Delight will infinitely surpass, all that the *Grecians* felt on *Tecqua*; when their ravished Eyes beheld, and their Tongues with Extasy shouted, *The Sea! The Sea!*

The Scene of yonder Picture, I would venture to affirm, lies among the antient *Jews*.

Eug. How can You tell this, Sir, at such a Distance?

Asp. By the *Fringes in the Borders of their Garments*, and on each Fringe a Ribband of Blue *.— GOD Almighty commanded all the *Jews*, to observe

* One would wonder, how the *Jews* can so *tenaciously* adhere to their Law, and yet so *apparently* neglect its Precepts. Where are the Sons of *Abraham*, who observe this express and positive Command of JEHOVAH? Though this indeed *might* be obeyed, yet many of the *Mosaical* Injunctions are rendered, and by nothing less than the Dispensations of Providence, absolutely impracticable. Is not this therefore a most incontestable Proof—a Proof, not invented by the Arts of Sophistry, but written by the Finger of the ALMIGHTY himself—that the *legal* Ordinances are abolished, in order to make way for a *better* Dispensation? When the Avenues are become inaccessible, the House untenable, and the principal Apartments *irreparably* decayed; is not this the most cogent Admonition to the Inhabitants, that they betake themselves to some new and more commodious Residence?—See *Numb.* xv. 38.

serve this Peculiarity in their Habit. That, their very Clothes, being different from the Apparel of their *Heathen* Neighbours, might admonish both the Wearers and the Beholders, not to be conformed to idolatrous Worship, and licentious Manners.—This, as well as every other divine Command, our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* most exactly obeyed. Therefore, We are told by the evangelical Historian, That the diseased Woman, *who touched but the Hem of his Garment, was restored to Health.* Hem it is, in our *English* Bibles. But, if You consult that most excellent of all Books, the *Greek* Testament; You will find, that the original Word might more properly be rendered *Fringe* *.—However, let Us pass from the Drapery to the Design.

Eug. Here, we see *David* in one of the most threatening Exigencies of his whole Life. *Saul*, more like a Blood-hound than a King, pursues the best of Sons, and the most valuable of Subjects. He has extended the Wings of his very superior Army, in order to surround † the injured Hero, and his Handful of Associates.

Asp.

* Matt. ix. 20. Κραγιον.

† To this, or some such Incident, may be applied a Passage of the *Psalms*, which, in our Translation, is very obscure; has scarce any Sense, or, if any, a very unjustifiable one. *Wherefore should I fear in the Days of Evil, when the Wickedness of my Heels compasseth me round about?* Psalm xlix. 5.—*Wherefore?* The Reason is very apparent. When Wickedness cleaves to a Person's Heels, or habitually attends his Goings, it raises an Army of Terrors. It unsheaths the Sword of divine Vengeance, and levels at his guilty Head every Threatening in the Book of GOD.

Surely then another Translation should be given to the Words, and a different Turn to the Sense! And another

Transla-

Asp. This is the most animated, and, I think, the most *masterly* Performance, that has hitherto come under our Notice.—Consternation and Doubt agitate their Looks. Shall they surrender themselves, as so many tame Victims, to a Tyrant's Fury? Or, shall they cut their Way to Safety, through the Hearts of Countrymen, Friends, and Brothers? Dreadful Dilemma!—While they are debating, the Pursuers are closing upon them. A few, a few Minutes more, must decide their Fate.

Eug. I have sometimes wondered, that the good and gracious GOD, should suffer his chosen Servant, to be brought into such imminent Peril. Especially, as infinite Wisdom, and almighty Power, could so easily have prevented it.

Asp. So then it is a Custom with You, to *consider* what You read. You endeavour to discern the Propriety of Scripture, and enter into its Design. In this

Translation the Words will bear; a different Sense the Connection demands. *Wherefore should I fear, when Wickedness compasseth me about at my Heels?* This is a fine spirited Interrogation. This implies a great and edifying Truth. From this also the Verse appears, not only with Propriety, but with Beauty.—*When Wickedness*, or the malicious Attempts of wicked Men—*compass me about*, surround me, threaten me on every Side—*nay*, when they are *at my very Heels*, just upon the Point to seize, overwhelm, and crush me; so that the Danger seems both inevitable and imminent.—Yet even then, having GOD's almighty Power and inviolable Faithfulness for my Protection, *wherefore should I be alarmed?* Alarmed! No; confiding in such a Safeguard, I will bid Defiance to my Enemies, and bid Adieu to my Fears.

According to this Interpretation, either the Prefix ב, or the Preposition על, is, before the Word עקב, to be understood. See *Isai.* xviii. 3. Where both these Particles, omitted in the Original, are supplied in our Translation.

this I cannot but commend you; because, in this you follow the most illustrious Example. You imitate the blessed *JESUS*. Who, about your Time of Life, *was found among the Doctors; both hearing them*, with diligent Attention, while they expounded the Scripture; *and*, when the Point was not fully illustrated, *asking them Questions* * for his farther Information.—Go on, Sir, to examine what You peruse; to enquire, where you do not understand; and, if you think proper to make me your Casuist, when any Difficulty occurs, you will do me an Honour, and give me a Pleasure.

As to the Case before Us—GOD almighty may suffer his chosen Servants to be brought into the most imminent Peril, for these, among other, Reasons. That the Blessing of Deliverance may be doubly *welcome*, and the Power of delivering more signally

* *Luke ii. 46. CHRIST disputing with the Doctors*, is a very common Expression. People have been confirmed in this Notion, by some injudicious Pictures.—But this is, certainly, a Misrepresentation of the Fact; and, I think, an Injury to our LORD's Character.

A Misrepresentation of the Fact—For We have not a Word said by the Evangelists, concerning any such Thing as Disputation. Neither are We told, that *JESUS* was in the Professor's Chair, but in the Place of a Learner; or, *in the Midst* of the *Jewish* Teachers. Who sat on Benches, ranged in a semicircular Figure, and raised above their Hearers. For which Reason, their Hearers or Scholars are said, to be in the Midst of them, or to *sit at their Feet*. Acts xxii. 3.

An Injury to our LORD's Character—He was, in his tender, as well as in his riper Age, a Pattern for Mankind. He practised, in each Period of Life, what was becoming and amiable, in that particular State. Now, as *Modesty*, and a teachable Temper, are essential to the Decorum of a youthful Conduct; these, we may be assured, were the distinguishing Characteristics of his early Years; were the inseparable Concomitants of the holy Child *JESUS*.

signally *conspicuous*.—It is, I acknowledge, a Maxim with Men, to crush the Cockatrice in the Egg. Because, when grown into a Serpent, it may not be easy, perhaps not be possible, to destroy or controul the venomous Beast. But the omnipotent RULER often takes the contrary Method. He permits Danger to arrive at the very Height. Matters are reduced even to a hopeless Extremity. *Then* He makes bare his holy Arm. *Then* He sends Help from his Sanctuary. To let all Men see; That Salvation, both temporal and eternal, is of the LORD; That no Case is irremediable, and nothing impossible with GOD.

The Ruin of these People seems indeed to be inevitable.—But who is the Person that intervenes, just at *this* critical Juncture?

Eug. It is a Messenger from the principal Inhabitants of *Judea*. He comes breathless and trembling. Amazement in his Face, and Dust upon his Head. “An Invasion!” He cries—“An Invasion!—“The *Philistines* have poured themselves upon our “Frontiers!—The *Philistines* are over-running the “Land *!”

Asp. Upon the Receipt of this News, See! what Vexation reddens in the disappointed Monarch’s Aspect! What Anger lightens in his Eye! At the same Time, what pale Reflections on his Country’s Danger, mingle themselves with the fiery Passions, and almost quench the Flame inkindling in his Cheeks.—Shall the Vulture relinquish his Prey, even when it lies fluttering under his Talons? Gall-
ing

* This Event is related, 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 25, &c. And it is one of the most extraordinary Instances of a divine Interposition, at the very Crisis of Need, that any History has recorded.

ing Thought! But his Kingdom is at stake. If He does not immediately advance to repel the Enemy, his All, his All is lost. Burning therefore with Indignation, yet chilled with Fear, He turns, hasty though reluctant, away. — Are You not charmed, *Eugenio*, with this Display of *tumultuous* and *contrary* Passions? Which afford the finest Subject for historic Painting, and are so happily expressed in this Piece.

Eug. Indeed, Sir, I am *shocked*, rather than charmed. The very Looks of that revengeful Monarch fill me with Horror. What must He suffer in his Mind, who discovers such Rage and Anguish in his Features! I would not have his furious Temper, for all his royal Power.

Asp. Then, my dear *Eugenio*, You must endeavour to suppress every Emotion of Envy and Malevolence. You must cherish a cordial Good-will to all Men; and learn to rejoice in *their* Excellencies and Happiness, as well as in *your own*. Envy is the Worm that gnaws, Envy is the Fury that embroils, his wretched Heart. And an Author, with whom You will ere long be acquainted, has assured Us;

*Invidiâ Siculi non invenere Tyranni
Tormentum majus.* H O R.

The next is a Kind of *Night-piece*. Stars are in the Sky, and the new Moon rides on the Skirts of the Hemisphere. Which affords just Light enough to distinguish Objects.—This is a perfect Contrast to the foregoing. We see no Conflict of jarring Passions; no fierce Gesture, or mad Demeanour. But the principal Person appears *sedate* and *composed*, as the Night that surrounds Him. He stands on the Bank of a River, thoughtful and attentive; as
though

though he was pondering, or executing, some important Project.

Eug. This is *Cyrus the Great*. He stands upon the Banks of the *Euphrates*; not far from *Babylon*. He points with his Sceptre, and is giving Directions to his Army. The Directions are, to pass through the Channel of the River (which is drained * of its Water) in order to surprise the City.

Asp. This is a Prince of very superior Dignity. The honoured Instrument of accomplishing J EHOVAH's Counsels. He was foretold by the Prophet *Isaiah*, He was even mentioned by Name †, more than two hundred Years before his Birth. Let Us wish Him Prosperity. For He goes to humble the Pride of *Babylon*, and release the Captivity of *Israel*.—See! The *Euphrates*, turned aside into the Drains, discovers its immense Bed. With what regular Movements, and what calm Alacrity, the Troops advance. Silence seems to escort them; while, under Covert of the Shades, and with Providence at their Head, they march along a Road, never before trodden by the Foot of Man ‡.—The Sol-

* *I will dry up thy Rivers.* Isai. xlv. 27. † Isai. xlv. 28. xlv. 1.

‡ May not the Prophet (*Isai*. xli. 2, 3.) allude to this memorable March, when, foretelling the Victories of *Cyrus*, He says? *Who raised Him up from the East, called Him to his Foot, gave the Nations before Him, and made Him rule over Kings? He pursued them, and passed safely, ארח ברגליו לא בוא* by the Way, says our Translation, that He had not gone with his Feet. But this reads flat, and appears inexpressive. *Nil sonat magnum aut memorabile.* Might not the Sentence be rendered? He passed safely, by a Way which no Man had ever gone with his Feet.

————— *Nullius ante
Trita Pede.*

This was real Fact; and this is truly wonderful.

Soldiers of the Garrison, have abandoned their Station on the Wall, to join in the dissolute Indulgence of this fatal Night. The Inhabitants, like many a heedless Sinner, are lulled in Indolence, and dreaming of Pleasures, even on the very Brink of Ruin.

Eug. Why are those *brazen Gates*, which lead to the River, placed in such a distinguished Point of View? They strike my Eye more, I think, than all the Monuments of Art and Grandeur, which adorn that superb City.—And let me farther ask; Whether the Painter has not offended against Probability, in suffering them to stand wide open? On the Approach of so formidable an Adversary, I should expect to have found them shut with all possible Security.

Asp. In this Particular, the Painter has shewed his Judgment, and not forgotten his Piety. GOD had devoted that haughty and oppressive Metropolis to Destruction. You will perceive, from this Circumstance, how wonderfully He *over-rules* all Events, for the Accomplishment of his sacred Purposes. Had those ponderous Gates been shut *, the City

* See this very momentous, though seemingly inconsiderable Circumstance, finely illustrated by Mr. *Rollin*, and compared with a remarkable Prophecy in *Isaiah*. *Antient Hist.* Vol. II. p. 144, 153.—A Work, in which the most *entertaining* and *instructive* Events of Antiquity, are regularly digested; elegantly related; and stripped of those minuter Incidents, which make the Story move slow, and are apt to fatigue the Attention.—Concise, but judicious Observations are interspersed. Which may teach young Minds, to form a right Judgment of Things: and not be misled, by the *Plausibility* of popular Notions, or the *Partiality* of prejudiced Historians.—Many very distinguished Predictions of Scripture, are explained and confirmed by correspondent Facts, from the most authentic Memoirs of classical Literature. Indeed, a perpetual Regard to the Elucidation and Honour of the *sacred Oracles*,

City had continued impregnable, and the whole Enterprize been defeated. But, through some accidental Forgetfulness, occasioned by the Disorders of this riotous Solemnity, or rather by a very *signal Interposition* of divine Vengeance, they are left open *, and afford an easy Entrance to Slaughter and Death. Which rush upon the unhappy Creatures, all sunk in Sleep, or overcharged with Wine; as a concealed Snare, in some dreadful unexpected Moment, springs up, and inextricably entangles the unwary Bird †. Was I to inscribe this Picture with a Motto, I would choose the Apostle's Admonition; BE SOBER: BE VIGILANT.

Who is this, with his Length of Hair † flowing upon his Shoulders; with such Amplitude of Personage,

runs through and ennobles the whole Performance. —Which Method, if not strictly conformable to the Rules of Historical Composition, is a Transgression of them greatly to their Advantage. It may be said to resemble the *golden Branch*, celebrated by *Virgil*, and plucked by his Hero. Whose Growth, though a Departure from the usual Laws of Vegetation, was far from depreciating the Value of the Tree.

I admire the Whole, but cannot enough admire the Conclusion. It is peculiarly pertinent, and inimitably grand. Has a Dignity, an Elevation, a Majesty, which, somewhat like the Kingdom described, are quite unequaled, and little less, than stupendous.

Παύθεις ἀψύχας, χερσὲν δ' ἐπέθηκεν κορῶν.

* The Gates shall not be shut. Isai. xlv. 1.

† How exactly does this Catastrophe agree with the Prophecy! I have laid a Snare for Thee, and Thou art also taken, O Babylon, and Thou wast not aware. Jer. i. 24.

† I believe, it was not customary with the Romans, especially their Warriors, to have long flowing Hair. This therefore might seem an Offence against what the

sonage, such Magnificence of Mien, and noble Plainness of Habit?

Eug. This is my favourite Piece.—My Father sometimes shews me the Heads of the Philosophers. But there is something so gloomy and severe, in *Diogenes* and *Epictetus*, that I could never much admire them.—But this, Sir, is *Scipio*; the Thunder-bolt of War, as *Virgil* calls Him. Here is something so sprightly and engaging, as well as grand and majestic, that I am never weary of looking on Him.

Asp. He appears with a Lady of distinguished Beauty in his Hand.

Eug. This is the captive Princess; who had been taken in War; who was set apart for the General's Prize; but whom he is now restoring to her espoused Husband.

Asp. You are right, *Eugenio*.—He has just led in his lovely Captive, attended by her Husband and Parents, amidst a full Assembly of *Romans* and *Celtiberians*; the Victors and the Vanquished. His modest Eyes, You observe, are rather turned from, than gazing upon, the blooming Virgin.—Cannot You suppose, how the Spectators must be affected, upon the Opening of this extraordinary Scene? Every One beholds, the Hero with Admiration, the Lady with Delight. Every Bosom is big with Expectation, or in pain for the Event. After a short Pause, He addresses Himself to the Lover, in Words to this Effect

Italians call *il Costume*, if the Painter was not supported by the Authority of *Livy*. Who, in his descriptive Picture of *Scipio*, gives Us the following Touches; *Species Corporis ampla ac magnifica. Præterquam quod suapte Natura multa Majestas inerat, adornabat promissa Cæsaries, Habitusque Corporis, non cultus Munditiis, sed virilis verè ac militaris.*

Effect—"I am no Stranger to your Interest in this
 " fine Woman. The Fortune of War has put her
 " entirely into my Power. The Circumstances of
 " my Youth cannot render me insensible to so en-
 " gaging a Person. But with Us *Romans*, Honour
 " and Generosity have a more prevailing Influence,
 " than transitory Gratifications. Take your Bride;
 " be happy in each Other; and when you look up-
 " on this Gift, admire the *Romans*, be a Friend to
 " *Rome*."—Upon this He delivers Her (as the Ac-
 tion is here represented) to the enamoured Prince.

See! how the Crouds, that cluster and hang a-
 round, are struck with the beneficent Deed!—In
 the *Geltiberians*, We behold a Mixture of Veneration
 and Surprise. Their Looks are full of Meaning.
 Methinks they are going to cry out; *Excellent Man!*
 —In the *Romans*, We discern a conscious Superiority,
 and Exultation of Mind. Triumph is in their Fea-
 tures. They say, or seem to say; *This wondrous*
Man is ours!—In the *Lady*, We admire the accom-
 plished and modest Fair; uniting all the Dignity of
 her Birth with all the Delicacy of her Sex. What
 soft Confusion, and what tender Joy, appear in her
 Countenance! She is lost in Wonder, and at a loss
 for Words. She speaks the Acknowledgments of
 her Heart, by the silent Eloquence of a Tear;
 which steals down her glowing Cheek, to bedew
 the kind Hand, that has protected her Innocence,
 and is resigning her to her Lord.—*Her Lord* is un-
 der an apparent, and a graceful Struggle, of Love
 and Gratitude. He dotes upon his charming Prin-
 cess, and He almost adores his generous Benefactor.
 We can hardly tell, whether He is going to clasp
 the former in his Arms, or throw himself at the

Feet of the latter.—The *aged Parents* express their Transport in a different Manner. Their Knees are bent to the Earth; their Eyes are lifted up to Heaven; they implore, for their honoured Guardian, every Blessing which the Gods can bestow.—*Scipio* Himself displays all the Magnanimity of the Conqueror, tempered with the Sedateness of the Philosopher, and softened with the Gentleness of the Friend. He gives Happiness, but He enjoys a greater. His Eyes sparkle with a sublime Delight; and He seems to anticipate the Applause, which this truly heroic Act will gain, in all Countries and in all Ages.

Eug. Is not this a greater Victory, than any that he had won, in the Field of Battle? And a nobler Triumph, than any that could be voted Him, by the applauding Senate? Amiable *Scipio*! Might I be a *Roman*, I would be no other than *Scipio*.

Asp. I wish You, my dear Sir, the Temperance and Generosity of *Scipio*. May You exercise them both; but from a better Motive than his. *He*, I fear, was too much swayed by a Spirit of Ambition; which *You* must, not cherish, but endeavour to suppress.—A Spirit of *Ambition*, which pants after Distinction, and thirsts for Applause, is diametrically opposite to the Genius of the Gospel *.—It is a Lesson, which must infallibly be unlearned, if ever We become Possessors of Faith, or Partakers of *CHRIST* †.—It is a Root of Bitterness, which naturally produces Envy ‡; that most odious, and (as You have just now seen) most self-tormenting of all Tempers.—It is a Habit of Mind, which generally

* Gal. v. 26. John vii. 18.
† Gal. v. 26.

† John v. 44.

rally renders Men Incendiaries in the Church, and Disturbers of its Tranquility*.—It is therefore more like an enchanted Potion which inebriates, than a genuine Cordial which animates.

Eug. From what Motive then would You encourage me, to be diligent in the Pursuit of Learning, and in the Cultivation of every Virtue?

Asp. Not, that You may acquire the poor, contemptible, perishing Honour, which cometh from Men—but, that You may *please* GOD, your Almighty CREATOR—that You may *glorify* CHRIST, your infinitely condescending REDEEMER—and may be qualified to promote the *best Interests* of your Fellow-creatures—even their present Holiness, and their eternal Happiness.

These are the grand and endearing Encouragements, which our holy Religion proposes. These will operate, I am bold to aver, with a much sweeter and a far more sovereign Efficacy, than all the glittering Enticements which *Ambition* can devise; or all the delusory Attractives, which *Emulation*, the Sister Syren, can suggest. And, what is above every other Consideration weighty, these Motives will be more likely, or rather these will be very certain, to receive the *divine* Blessing.

You told me, You was never weary of contemplating *Scipio*. For which Reason, I promise Myself, You will not be fatigued or displeased, though I have so long confined your Attention to this Pourtrait.—But have We no Hero of *Britain*, fit to join this illustrious Triumvirate from *Rome*, *Persia*, and *Judea*?

S 3

Eug.

Eug. The very next We meet, is one of our *English* Kings. But I cannot say, that I remember either his Name, or his Story.

Asp. How, my young Gentleman! Do You read the Annals of *other* Nations, and not acquaint Yourself with the Affairs of *your own* Country?—If I was in your Place, I would apply myself to the classical Writers by way of Study, and to some valuable *English* Historian by way of Amusement. Such an Amusement is infinitely preferable to *Novels* or *Romances*; and will not only relax your Attention, but enrich your Mind.

Eug. I thank You, good Sir, for your Admonition. If You please, I will now begin the Study, You recommend. Your Explanation of these Drawings, shall be the Rudiments of my Knowledge. And I shall think it a Happiness, to receive my first Instructions, from so able a Master.

Asp. It is Honour enough for *me, Eugenio*, to have given You the Hint. I pretend to nothing more, than to point out your Game, or to spring the Convey. You shall be taught, by a more expert Proficient, to make it your own. Yet, though Others may direct You with greater Skill, None will rejoice in your successful Pursuit, more sincerely than myself.

This is our renowned *Henry the Fifth*; as He appeared after the Victory of *Agincourt*. You see the gallant Conqueror clad in Steel, and recent from the Slaughter of the insulting Foe. He seems to breathe an heroic Ardour, which is irradiated and exalted by a lively Devotion. If *Courage* can be expressed by the Pencil, this is the genuine Likeness: keen, yet composed; grasping the Sword, yet looking

ing up to Heaven.—He that, a little while ago, drove the Battle, like a Whirlwind *, on the Legions of *France*; now, bends a suppliant Knee, and offers the eucharistic Hymn, to the LORD GOD of Hosts. No turbulent or disorderly Joy riots among the Soldiery. They express not the Triumph of their Hearts, in frantic Exultations, or drunken Revels; but in Acts of Thanksgiving to JEHOVAH, In an Attitude, which speaks the devout Acknowledgment of the Prophet, *Thou art our Battle-Ax and Weapons of War* †; or the grateful Declaration of the Psalmist, *Not unto Us, O LORD, not unto Us, but unto THY Name be the Glory* ‡.

This last Instance informs my *Eugenio*, That *Prayer and Praise* are an honourable Employ—have been practised by Persons of the most admired Endowments—are the surest Method of obtaining *Success*, in whatever Business We undertake; and of enjoying *Prosperity*, in whatever Circumstances We are placed.

The next Piece is different from all the preceding. In *those*, Armies with their Ensigns floating to the Winds, Ships of War riding at Anchor, battering Engines and Instruments of Death, form the Perspective. In *this*, We have, all around, a lovely rural Landscape; expressive of Peace, and enriched with Plenty. Corn and Cattle in the Valleys; fruitful Vineyards on the Hills; and beautiful Gardens surrounding the Houses.—But who is that

S 4 graceful

* For this bold and beautiful Image, We are obliged to the Prophet. יָצְאוּ כַּחַם לְרוּחַ They came out as a Whirlwind to scatter me. Habak. iii. 14.

† Jer. li. 20.

‡ Psal. cxv. 1.

graceful and august Personage, seated on a Throne of Ivory and Gold?

Eug. This is *Solomon*, having an Interview with the Queen of *Sheba*. A large Train of her Attendants throng the Avenues of the Palace. Some leading foreign Animals: Some, bearing Vases and Caskets: All, arrayed in strange Apparel. The *Israelites* wonder at their outlandish Visitants, their costly Presents, and peculiar Habits. Their Visitants are as much surpris'd at the Walls, the Towers, and especially the Temple of *Jerusalem*. But You, Sir, I apprehend, are most pleas'd with the venerable Person, who fills the Throne.

Asp. Indeed I am, and so is his royal Guest.— You observe, in her Robe, her Retinue, her Deportment, an unpolished Kind of Grandeur. But all in *Solomon* is so splendid, and at the same Time so elegant; displays such a Delicacy of Taste, and such a Magnificence of Spirit; that the *Sabaean* Princess is perfectly in Raptures. See! How She stands fixed and gazing with speechless Admiration*; like One lost in Astonishment, and transported with Delight! Her Looks speak, what, when She recovers the Power of Utterance, her Tongue expresses; *It was a true Report, that I heard in my own Land, of thy Acts, and of thy Wisdom. Howbeit, I believed not the Words, until I came, and mine Eyes had seen: and behold! the Half was not* told

* This, I apprehend, is the Meaning of that remarkably strong Expression, used by the sacred Historian; *There was no more Spirit in Her*, 1 Kings x. 5. It seems to have been a well known and customary Phrase among the *Hebrews*, to denote the *Extremes*, either of Surprise, or Terror. See *Josb.* v. 1.

told me: thy Wisdom and Prosperity exceed the Fame which I heard *.

Eug. This is a high Compliment. Is it right, Sir, to praise a Man, in such plain Terms and such high Strains, 'to his very Face? I think, I have heard *Philenor* blame such a Practice, as inconsistent with refined Manners. And I have heard my Father say; No One is a better Judge of fine Breeding, than *Philenor*. If the most agreeable Behaviour, added to the most winning Conversation, are what You call *fine Breeding*, I am sure, *Philenor* is Master of it to a very great Degree. I love to be in his Company, and am never better pleased, than to hear Him talk.

Asp. The Compliment, though high, is just. It is strictly conformable to Truth, and proceeds from the most unaffected Sincerity. If We consider what follows, We shall have a Pattern of true Politeness; a Propriety and a Refinement of Address, far surpassing all her Majesty's external State.—*Happy are thy Men; happy are these thy Servants; which stand continually before Thee, and that hear thy Wisdom.* Instead of envying, She congratulates the Domestics of Solomon, and rejoices in their superior Felicity. This is Benevolence.—*Blessed be the LORD thy GOD, which delighted in Thee, to set Thee on the Throne*

* This is somewhat like the fine Compliment, which Cicero pays to his learned Client *Archias*. *In cæteris Asiæ Partibus, cunctæque Græciæ, sic ejus Adventus celebrabatur, ut Famam Ingenii Expectatio Hominis; Expectationem, ipsius Adventus Admiratioque superaret.* Though I think her Majesty's Sentiments, as they are more simple and artless than the Orators; are also, like the Spices and Fruits of her Clime, more richly scented, and more highly flavoured.

Throne of Israel. Because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made He Thee King, to do Judgment and Justice. Here She ascribes all his royal Virtues, and sublime Accomplishments, to the Bounty of Heaven. Though they are applauded in the Person of *Solomon*, they are recognized as the free Gift of *GOD*. This is *Piety*.—When the Endowments We celebrate, lead Us to magnify, not their Possessor, but their Author; then the Poison is corrected, and turned into Medicine. Praise, thus circumstanced, loses its Malignity, and is rendered salubrious.

It pleases me to perceive, that You take so much Notice of the Conversation, which passes between your worthy Father, and his ingenious Friends. I promise myself, You will also remember the Maxim, which We have now learned from a Queen. A Queen, whom not only the sacred Historian, but our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* Himself vouchsafes to mention, and with Marks of Approbation. Whose Name therefore will be had in Honour, when *Semiramis* and *Cleopatra*, the Heroines and the Beauties, are consigned over to Oblivion. The Maxim, which I mean, is this—There must be an Union of Sincerity, of Benevolence, and of Piety, in order to constitute *true Politeness*. Whoever pretends to fine Breeding, and is destitute of these Qualities, is nothing more than a Pretender. He bears just the same Proportion to this ornamental Character, as the Ape and the Monkey bear to the Man.

But We have not sufficiently examined our Picture. The Dome is of Cedar; supported by Pillars of Marble; on which are suspended Curtains of Silk and Embroidery.—The Pillars shine with the

most

most glossy Polish, and swell upon the Eye with the boldest Projections. The Curtains, pendent in large and easy Folds, seem not adhesive to the Canvass, but waving in the Air.—The Throne is exquisitely contrived, richly ornamented, and highly finished. It is evident, the Painter had in his Eye that memorable Observation of Scripture, *There was not the like made in any Kingdom*; and He has really done all, which Art could devise, or Colours execute, in order to exemplify the great Encomium.

If the Monarch was absent, We should desire no better Entertainment, than to view the Beauties of the Apartment: but can hardly allow any Attention to the Edifice, when so graceful and so grand a Presence bespeaks our Regard. For I must own, there appears to me something peculiarly excellent in this Figure: a *Serenity* and *Dignity*, without any of that martial Air, which adds a Tincture of Ferocity to the Warrior: a *Sagacity* and *Penetration*, not to be equaled by the Wrinkles of Age, yet transparent through all the Bloom of Youth. Piety and Wisdom, the Love of GOD and the Grace of his SPIRIT, give an Elevation to the Mind; give a secret Charm to the Countenance; and something more than mortal to the whole Man.—I am apt to suspect, *Eugenio*, that You yourself are ready to adopt a new Favourite. That You now prefer *Solomon* even to *Scipio*; and had rather be like the *Beloved of the LORD**, than the Darling of Rome.

Eug.

* *Beloved of the LORD*—This is the Meaning of *Jedidiah*; the Name, which *Solomon* received, by the express Order of JEHOVAH. 2 Sam. xii. 25.

Eug. Every Thing in *Solomon* is so venerable and heavenly, that I am filled with Awe, rather than incited to Imitation. It is not for a Boy, to think of imitating such high Perfection!

Asp. Why not, my dear Sir? It was GOD who gave *Solomon* his superior Wisdom, and exalted Accomplishments. And GOD is the same Yesterday, to Day, and for ever: as willing to hear, and as able to help You, as He was to hear and bless his Servant *Solomon*.—Neither let your Youth be a Discouragement. Out of the Mouth of very Babes and Sucklings, HE ordaineth Strength *. *Samuel* ministered in the Temple, when He was but a Child †. *Josiah*, while He was yet young, began to seek after the GOD of his Fathers ‡. *Timothy* was acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, from his earliest Years §. And *Solomon* himself was none of the oldest, when He was favoured with that extraordinary Vision, and made that admirable Choice at *Gibeon* §. A Passage of Scripture, which I dare say, You have read; which I would recommend to your attentive Consideration; and which, I hope, You will take for the Model of your Conduct.—And if You, like that illustrious young Prince, desire a wise and understanding Heart, more than the Affluence of Wealth, or the Distinctions of Honour: if You seek Wisdom as Silver, and search for Her as for hid Treasure: then shall You also understand the Fear of the LORD, and find the Knowledge of GOD ¶.

The next that occurs, presents Us with a View of the Sea; and a most tremendous View it is.

Eug.

* Psal. viii. 2. † 1 Sam. ii. 18. ‡ 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3. § 2 Tim. iii. 15. § 1 Kings iii. 5, 6, &c. ¶ Prov. ii. 4, 5.

Eug. This is the Voyage related by the Evangelist; when our LORD, sailing with his Disciples, bid the Storm be still, and made the Ocean calm.

Asp. Then We may truly say; *A Greater than Solomon is here* *! — Though *Solomon* was wise, *CHRIST* is Wisdom itself.—Give me Leave to hint, upon this Occasion, that every Picture of *CHRIST* must necessarily *depreciate* his glorious Person. Therefore You will never think, that a few Rays beaming round his sacred Head, can properly distinguish the SON of GOD; can express either the Grace of his Offices, or the Divinity of his Nature. It is not to display the Perfections of our *LORD JESUS Himself*, but only to give Us an Idea of one of his *Works*, that the Pencil has been employed on this grand Subject.

You will also remember; That it was not the main Ocean, but the Lake of *Tiberias*, on which they sailed. However, the Painter is at Liberty, to make his Sea as large as He pleases, and his *Storm* as terrible as He can. Accordingly, He has collected all the Horrors of a Tempest.—Lightnings fire the Arch above; and Thunders, could Thunders have been painted, would have rocked the Ground below.

* *A greater than Solomon*—This is what our blessed LORD affirms concerning Himself. In which, We may observe the utmost Dignity, tempered with the utmost Decorum. He will avoid the very Appearance of Ostentation, even when He thinks it necessary to assert his native Honour. Therefore, He says not, *I am greater than Solomon*; but, *a greater than Solomon is here*. Leaving every One, who has Eyes to see his mighty Works, and a Heart to understand his transcendent Excellencies—leaving every such Person, to make the Application. *Matt. xii. 41.* See another Instance of this amiable ἀφιλοψυγία, Ver. 6.

low. Those flaming Bolts have smitten a huge Promontory, and tore its rugged Brow. See! how the rocky Fragment is tumbling, with impetuous Bound, from Cliff to Cliff.—The Waters, lashed by furious Winds, heave and toss their tumultuous Billows. Here, they rise in rolling Ridges; there, they rage in devouring Whirls.—Amidst these horrible Comotions, You behold a *Vessel* in all the Extremity of *Distress*. Straining under the Blast; battered and half overwhelmed by the Surge; she can no longer maintain the unequal Conflict. She yields to the resistless Flood; and begins, evidently begins to sink.—Perplexed, amazed, and at their Wit's End, the Disciples run to and fro. They shift the Tackling; lighten the Stowage; try every Expedient; and find, to their unspeakable Affliction, every Expedient ineffectual.

We cast our Eye forward, and their divine MASTER appears, sedately rising from a gentle Slumber. He sees the Perplexity and Horror of his Companions, without the least Emotion of Alarm. He sees Destruction approaching, Heaven and Earth mingling, and, instead of being dismayed, *enjoys* the elemental War.—What Composure in his Mien! What Dignity in his Attitude! What Majesty, sweetened with Compassion, in his Aspect! Such as could arise from no other Cause, but a conscious and undoubted Certainty, that not one of the Company should perish; that not a Hair of their Head should be injured; and that all this mighty Uproar of Nature, should end in a Demonstration of his *mightier* Power, and a Confirmation of his Disciples *Faith*.—He looks abroad into the mutinous Sky, and the turbulent Deep. He waves, with an au-

thoritative Air, his sacred Hand; and adds the great commanding Word, PEACE: Be STILL.—Do You enquire after the Effect? Let *Milton* declare it;

*Confusion heard his Voice, and wild Uproar
Stood rul'd.*

This is expressed in another Draught. Where all is hushed: the tremendous Agitations cease, and the most profound Tranquility takes place. The Water is smooth as Glass; We have the Picture of a perfect *Calm*; and view those very Persons, who, a little while ago, were in the wildest Distraction, and in the Jaws of Ruin, surrounding their LORD as Men alive from the Dead *. Their Consternation is turned

* The Circumstances of this Miracle, as related by the Evangelists, are truly wonderful, and to the last Degree picturesque.

Master! Master! We perish! How concise, how abrupt, and how ardent is this Exclamation! Therefore how strongly significant of imminent Danger, and of the utmost Distress! They have not Time to be explicit. A Moment's Delay may be fatal. What they utter is Vehemence itself, and all Rapidity, *Luke viii. 24.*—This is Nature: this is the genuine Language of the Heart: this is true historic Painting. Every impartial Reader must admire this exquisitely fine Stroke, far beyond the diffuse and (I had almost said, *impertinently*) florid Speech, which *Virgil* puts into the Mouth of his Hero on a like Occasion. *Æn. I. 98.*

Σωτα, ὀψιμωοι. What a Majesty in this Command! 'Tis admirable: 'tis inimitable: 'tis worthy of GOD.—I think, We may observe a peculiarly proper Word, addressed and adapted to each Element: the first injoining a *Cessation* of the *Winds*, the second a *Quiescence* of the *Waves*: Silence in all that roared, Composure in all that raged. As though (to give a short Paraphrase of the grand

turned into Wonder, and their Pangs of Fear into Extasies of Joy. They acknowledge the Omnipotence, and adore the Goodness of *JESUS*.

Eug. Well may they acknowledge his *Omnipotence*; since *Winds and Waves obey Him*. Great Reason have they to adore his *Goodness*, since He rescued them from the very Jaws of Death; that worst of Deaths, perishing in the stormy Deep.

Asp. If *JESUS CHRIST* had vouchsafed such a Deliverance to my *Eugenio*; What would He have thought, or how would He have been affected?

Eug. I should have thought myself *inexpressibly* obliged; and that I could never shew *sufficient* Gratitude to so great a Benefactor.

Asp. Assure yourself then, my dear Sir, that He has done infinitely more for You.—That He has delivered You, not indeed from being swallowed up by the raging Billows, but from sinking into the Pit of everlasting Perdition.—That He has not only rescued You from endless Destruction, but obtained eternal Life and heavenly Happiness for You.—Done all this, not by speaking a Word, or issuing a Command; but by bearing your Guilt, and suffering your Punishment; even by dying the most
igno-

grand Injunction) it had been said; Winds, *be hushed*; Waves, *be calm*, Mark iv. 39.

The *Effect*, which this Miracle has on the Disciples, is described, with all the Force of Imagination, and all the Energy of Diction. To represent in Colours, what the evangelical Historian has left upon Record, would be a Subject fit for the immortal *Raphael*; and perhaps not to be equaled even by his masterly Pencil. *Αἰσθ' ἐκ περισσῆς ἐν ταῖς ἐξιστάς τε θαύμαζον—θαύμαζον*, they were amazed—*ἐξιστάς*, they were transported with Amazement—*λάν*, to the very greatest Degree—*ἐκ περισσῆς*, exceeding all that Language can express. *Mark* vi. 51.

ignominious and tormenting Death, in your Stead. —Should You not then *unfeignedly* love HIM? Study to please HIM? And make it the *reigning* Endeavour of your Life to glorify HIM?

Here, *Theron* returned, and the young Student withdrew; after receiving some affectionate and encouraging Compliments from *Aspasio*. Who was going to enlarge upon the excellent Taste of his Friend; the instructive Style of his Pictures; the good Sense and great Proficiency of his Son. But *Theron*, far from coveting Praise; and fully satisfied with the Consciousness, of acting the becoming Part, prevented his Discourse, by stepping to a Pair of Glass Folding-doors. Which, thrown open, admitted them into the *Study*.

A Chimney-piece of grey Marble, with plain but grand Mouldings, formed a very handsome Appearance.—In various little Niches, were fixed elegant *Busts*; and on the several Interstices, hung beautiful *Prints*; representing many of those eminently learned Men, who were the Ornaments and Blessings, both of antient and modern Times. The Shelves, all around, were accommodated, not incumbered, with Books. *Aspasio*, running over the lettered Backs, observed a Collection of the most valuable Authors, in History and Natural Philosophy, in Poetry and Divinity.

You will easily perceive, said *Theron*, that I am somewhat singular in furnishing my Study, as well as in ornamenting the Avenue. My Books are not for Shew, but Use; and claim a Regard, rather on account of their Worth, than their Number.—An immense Multitude of Volumes, I have always

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thought, is more likely to embarrass the Attention, than to improve the Understanding. A *huge* Library seems to resemble a perplexing *Labyrinth*; and often bewilders the Mind in its Pursuits, instead of leading it expeditiously to the Acquisition of Truth.

When People are eager to peruse a Multiplicity of Writings, it frequently happens, that in reading all, they digest none *. They taste some empty and transient Amusement, but collect no solid or lasting Advantage. Their Minds are somewhat like those capacious Looking-glasses, which We have seen exposed in the most frequented and populous Streets of *London*. They receive all Manner of shadowy Images, but no substantial Impression. A thousand Figures *pass through* them, not one *abides* in them.

Our Books, replied *Assasio*, as well as our Friends, should rather be *select*, than *numerous*. For my Part, I would desire no more than two or three of the most correct and masterly Writers in any Science. These, a Person of moderate Capacity may be able to comprehend; and not comprehend only, but enrich his Memory with the choicest Sentiments, and make the Substance of their Works his own.—He will, by Repetition and familiar Converse, enter into their *Spirit*, and acquire their *Manner*. While a Rambler

* The Author of *Night-Thoughts* has touched this Subject, with great Judgment, and equal Sprightliness.

*Voracious Learning, often overfed,
Digests not into Sense the motley Meal.*

*This Forager on Other's Wisdom, leaves
Her native Farm, her Reason quite untill'd.
With mixt Manure She surfeits the rank Soil,
Dung'd but not dress'd; and rich to Beggary.*

in reading, does little more than gratify his Fancy, without refining his Taste, or amending his Heart.

Upon this *Aspasio* turned Himself; and espied, in one Corner of the Apartment, the celestial and terrestrial *Globes*; in another, a large reflecting *Telescope*; and on the Top of a Buroe, one or two of the best *Microscopes*.

These Instruments, resumed *Theron*, have opened an inexhaustible Fund of the finest Entertainments*.

They have furnished Us with *new Eyes*; and brought up, I will venture to say, a *new World* into our View.

They give Us a Sight of Wonders, which may seem incredible to the incurious Vulgar; and which were

utterly unknown, to the most inquisitive Sages of Antiquity. They charm the Eye with a Display

of Beauties; of inimitable Beauties, even where no-

T 2

thing

* Gentlemen of Taste and Seriousness cannot, I think, have a nobler Piece of Furniture for their Studies, than the *Microscope* and the *Telescope*, the *Orrery* and the *Air-pump*. This Apparatus would afford them a most delightful and improving Amusement in a solitary Hour.—

It would also give them an Opportunity of entertaining their Company, in a truly elegant and very instructive Manner. It would open a fine and ample Field, for displaying the Glories of GOD the CREATOR, and of

GOD the REDEEMER.—As the Discoveries made by these Instruments, are so surprising in themselves, and

new to the Generality of Mankind, every edifying Hint deduced from such Observations, would come with a peculiar Recommendation.—This, I am sure, would be a

Method of reducing to Practice, what the polite Historian has recorded of the politer *Scipio*; *Elegantissimo Intervalla Negotiorum Otio dispuinxit*. VELL. PATERC.—And,

I believe, it might be a happy Means of turning the Soul, to bear a Part in that immortal Hymn, *Worthy art Thou,*

O LORD, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power; for Thou hast created all Things; and for thy Pleasure they now

exist, and were at first created. Rev. iv. 11.

thing worthy of Notice was expected. They throw the Mind into a pleasing Transport of Admiration; and from the meanest, lowest Objects, raise the most *amiable* and *exalted* Ideas of the All-glorious CREATOR.

I have often regretted, that such rational and manly Gratifications should be almost universally supplanted, by the *fantastical* and *childish* Amusements in Vogue. Why should not the Contemplation of Nature's surprising Novelties, be as acceptable an Entertainment, as the stale Diversion of *Quadrille*; be as refined an Employ for a leisure Hour, as to count the Spots on a Pack of Cards? —The Ladies, I am very sure, might find brighter Colours, and more delicate Ornaments, in the Robes and Head-dress of a common *Fly*; than ever they found amidst the Trinkets of a *Toy-shop*. And was the fair Circle of Females once acquainted with the radiant Varnish and rich Studs, which enamel the Cover of a *Beetle's* Wing; I am apt to think, they would view with less Rapture, with more Indifference, perhaps, with a becoming Disdain, all the pretty Fancies of a *Beau's* Wardrobe.

A few Days ago, when the accomplished *Manilia* favoured Us with a Visit, I shewed Her, through a magnifying Glass, the Sting of a Bee, the Scale of a Soal, the Wing of a Gnat, and some other *beautiful Minims* of Nature; together with the Powder, which adheres to our Finger, when we touch the Body of a Moth.—“Amazing! cried the young Lady. What elegant Figures! What enchanting Finery!

————— *Smallest Lineaments exact,
In all the Liveries deck'd of Summer's Pride,
With Spots of Gold and Purple, Azure and Green*.*

“ How perfect the Polish, and how high the Fi-
“ nishing, of that little *Weapon*!—This Piece of
“ *defensive* Armour, how skilfully contrived, and
“ how curiously wrought! Here, rising into little
“ Ridges, like the Bosses of a Buckler; fitted to
“ repel Injuries. There, scooped into little Cavi-
“ ties, designed, I suppose, to diminish its Weight;
“ that the Coat of Mail may not incumber, even
“ while it defends, the puny Wearer.—What I
“ took to be a whitish despicable Rag, is the *neatest*
“ *Fan*, I ever beheld. Mounted on Sticks † in-
“ imitably tapering and slender. Tinged with all
“ the soft and lovely Colours of the most glossy
“ Mother of Pearl.—But, what astonishes me more
“ than all, is the View of that coloured Dust;
“ which your Instrument has turned into a *Cluster*
“ of *Feathers*. Every one wrought off with a Re-
“ gularity and a Delicacy, that are beyond the
“ Power of Description. The finest Stroke drawn
“ by the *Italian Pen*, compared with the extreme
“ Minuteness of the Shaft, is broad and bulky as
“ an Admiral's Mast. A Speck of Leaf-gold, could
“ it be weighed against the exquisite Attenuations
“ of the Vane ‡, would seem more substantial and
“ ponderous than yonder Marble Slab.

T 3

“ How

* MILTON, Book VII.

† These *Sticks*, are the little *Ribs*, which support, at proper Intervals, the fine transparent Membrane of the Wing.

‡ *Vane* is the *feathery* Part of a Quill.

“How nice, even to a Prodigy, must be the Mechanism of the *animalcule* Race! I see Globules, I see Tides of Blood, rolling through Mæanders inexpressibly finer, than the finest Hair.—Stranger still! I see Sholes of active Creatures, expatiating in a single Drop of Water*: taking their Pastime amidst such a scanty Canal, as unstraitened and as much at large, as *Leviathan* in the Abysses of the Ocean.—A whole Kingdom of these Creatures, though collected into a Body, are quite undiscernable by the naked Eye. What then must be the Size of every *Individual*? Yet in every Individual there is a complete System of Limbs; each Limb must have Muscles and Nerves; each Nerve must have Sense and Strength; and all these are assembled, though not crouded, in a living *Atom*.—To reflect upon the Texture of Vessels, and the Operation of Organs, so complex, so numerous, yet so inconceivably minute; how it awakens Admiration! Fills me with Reverence of the Almighty MAKER! and yields a Pleasure, infinitely superior to all the modish

Amuse-

* In a single Drop of Water, Dr. Hook is said to have discovered, with his *Microscope*, eight Millions two hundred and eighty thousand *Animalcules*.—This is mentioned, because it is the prevailing Philosophy of the Age. Though I must confess, that Mr. *Gautier* seems to have gone a considerable Way, towards giving it another Turn. As He has proved, before a learned Assembly at *Paris*, That the *Vermiculars* of *Leuwenhoeck*, and the living *Molecules* of Mr. *de Buffon*, were only Balls of Air agitated by the fermenting of the Seed. If so, it is not impossible, but Dr. *Hook's* *Animalcula* may be nothing more than Balls of Air, agitated by the Fermentation of the Pepper.

Be this as it will, the young Lady's Remarks on the Wonders of *Mechanism* in the *animalcule* Creation, I believe, will never be controverted.

"Amusements of our Sex!—Your Discoveries of
 " *Life in Miniature*, have given me a Disgust of,
 " what is called, *High Life*, and its solemn Fop-
 " peries. You have spoiled me, *Theron*, for a fa-
 " shionable Trifler. I shall no longer relish the
 " dull Oeconomy of the Fan, or the poor Parade
 " of the Snuff-box."

Asp. Have You nothing to say of the *Telescope*?
 —I believe, it must be my Province to celebrate
 this admirable Invention; and I wish I could do it,
 with *Manilia's* brilliant Imagination.—If the *Micro-*
scope leads Us downward, to the curious Secrets of
 the animalcule Creation; the *Telescope* bears Us up-
 ward, to the grand Peculiarities of the starry Regions.
 The Eye, conducted by this wonderful Guide, visits
 a Variety of majestic Orbs, which would otherwise
 be lost in unmeasurable Tracts of *Æther*.—This,
 far more surprising than the Discoveries of *Columbus*,
 has found out new Colonies of Worlds, in every
 Quarter of the nocturnal Skies. This has placed a
 glittering Crescent, on the Brow of one * of the
 Planets; and has given others a most stately Train
 of Attendants †.

Tell me, *Theron*; could You discern the full Choir
 of the Constellations, or distinguish the variegated
 Face of the Moon, without the Aid of your *Telescopic*
 Tube? Could You, with your unassisted Eye, get a
 Sight of *Jupiter's* Satellites, or procure a Glimpse of
Saturn's Ring?—Without that supplementary Aid to
 our Sight, they are quite imperceptible; though the
 Satellites of the former, are incomparably more mag-
 nificent, than the *Retinue* of all the Monarchs in the
 T 4 World;

* The Planet *Venus*.
 and *Saturn*.

† The Satellites of *Jupiter*

World; and compared with the Ring of the latter, all the *Bridges* on ten thousand Rivers, are less than the *Ferule* of your Cane.

As the *Telescope* to the Eye, so is *Revelation* to the Understanding. It discovers Truths, which exclusive of such a Discovery, had been for ever hid from the most sagacious Minds.—'Tis strange to the unlearned Observer, that this ponderous Globe of Earth and Seas, should wheel its rapid Circuit round the Sun. But the *Telescope* has rendered this Fact clear to a Demonstration.—'Tis strange likewise to our natural Apprehensions, that We should die in *Adam*, and be undone by our first Parents Disobedience. Nor less so, that We should be made alive in *CHRIST*, and derive our Recovery from his *imputed* Righteousness. But Revelation makes this Doctrine as certain, as it is comfortable.

Ther. Does Revelation make it certain?—This is a Point not yet established, but taken for granted. I rather apprehend, that Revelation, in no Place maintains it, in many Places disavows it.—During your Absence, *Assasio*, I have spent some Time in searching the Scriptures, with a particular View to this Tenet. I can find no such Expression in the whole Bible, as the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness. If it was so *leading* an Article, as You represent; surely, it could not have been entirely forgotten by the inspired Writers, nor utterly excluded from *their* Body of Divinity.

Assp. The very identical Expression may not occur, and yet the Doctrine be abundantly taught. I believe, You never met with the Word *Resurrection*, in any Part of the Pentateuch; nor ever read the Phrase *Satisfaction*, in all the New Testament. Yet our

LORD

LORD fully proved the Truth of the former, from the Writings of *Moses*; and You Yourself have acknowledged the latter, to be the unanimous Sense of the Apostles and Evangelists.

In the Epistle to the *Romans*, We have express and repeated Mention of a Righteousness imputed. *What* or *whose* Righteousness, can be the Subject of this Assertion?—Not the Righteousness of *Angels*. They are a superior Class of Beings, and have no such intimate Connection with our Nature.—Not the Righteousness of eminent *Saints*. This is the exploded Error of Popery; and furnishes the *Romish* Zealots with that Chimera of Arrogance and Folly, Works of Supererogation.—Not any Righteousness of our own: for, it is positively declared, to be *without Works* *; in which no Works of our own have any Concurrence, or the least Share.—What other Righteousness then can be meant, but the Righteousness of our great SUSTITUTE, SURETY, and SAVIOUR? Who took our Nature; discharged our Debt; and is therefore styled, *JEHOVAH our Righteousness* †.

Ther. This seems contrary to the whole Tenour of the sacred Instructions. What says the Prophet? *When the wicked Man turneth away from his Wickedness that He hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, He shall save his Soul alive* ‡.—Here, that greatest of Blessings, the Salvation of the Soul, is ascribed to a *Departure from Evil*, and a *Perseverance in Good*: to a real Alteration in a Man's own Temper and Conduct, not to any fanciful Application of some transmissive Righteousness from Another.

Asp.

* Rom. iv. 6.
xviii. 27.

† Jer. xxiii. 6.

‡ Ezek.

Ass. Let me ask my *Theron*; Is there no Wickedness, but Riot and Debauchery, Profaneness and Injustice?—*Unbelief*, though it may pass without Censure or Notice in a System of Morality, is, in the Volume of Revelation, declared a capital Crime. Our LORD, speaking of the HOLY SPIRIT, mentions it as a signal Part of his Office, That *He shall convince the World of Sin*.—Of what Sin? Scandalous Violations of moral Rectitude? This were a needless Employ. The Light of Reason is sufficient, to evince such a Charge; and the Court of Conscience is erected, to pass the deserved Sentence.—Of Sin, adds the heavenly TEACHER, *because they believe not on me**: on my Death, as the Cause of their Forgiveness; on my Righteousness, as the Ground of their Acceptance; on my SPIRIT, as the powerful Principle of their Holiness.

Unbelief treats GOD as a Liar†; because it rejects the Testimony, which He has bore concerning his beloved SON.—Unbelief tramples on the Blood of CHRIST, and is a most contemptuous Affront to all his saving Offices.—Unbelief would counteract the Operations of the HOLY GHOST; whose peculiar Work it is, to testify of CHRIST, and make manifest his Righteousness.—To say all in a Word; Unbelief is that great, that comprehensive Sin, which scornfully rejects, or impiously renounces, the most glorious Method of Salvation, which Omniscience itself could devise ‡.

The

* John xvi. 9.

† 1 John v. 10.

‡ *Bengelius* makes no Scruple to affirm, *Pejus est non credere Evangelio, quam Sodomitas imitari*. That is; Not to believe the Gospel, not to receive the glad Tidings of Grace in CHRIST, is more provoking, and will prove

The wicked Man, therefore, never turns from his Wickedness; till He turns, by a true Faith, to *JESUS CHRIST*. Till then, He is a Rebel against the *Gospel*, however He may pay some specious and partial Regard to the Law. So flagrant a Rebel, that he stands particularly excepted, even in the Act of Evangelical Indemnity. For, as *He that believeth on the SON, hath everlasting Life; so, He that believeth not, is condemned already, and the Wrath of GOD abideth on him **.

Ther. What are the *Psalmist's* Sentiments on this Subject? Does not He represent the Matter in a very different Light? *Thou, LORD, art merciful; for Thou rewardest every Man according to his, not Another's, Works †*.

Asp. Weighty Saying! May it impress our very Hearts!—*GOD* is merciful, and *therefore* rewardeth. From whence it appears, that what We call a Reward, is really an Act of Mercy, rather than of Justice. The *Wages* of Sin is Death; but the Gift (says

prove more destructive, than the Sin of *Sodom*. This He grounds, not on the Reasons assigned by *Aspasio*, but on that which includes them all, and surpasses them all, even our *LORD's* own Declaration, *Matt. x. 15*.

* *John iii. 18, 36*: The Words are exceedingly emphatical, and no less awful.—Not barely He *shall* come into Condemnation, but He (that believeth not) *is* condemned already. Though ever so civilized or refined in his outward Conversation, He lies under a Sentence of Death, and is the Object of divine Wrath.—Which not only will *visit* Him, but *abideth* on Him. So that, where-ever He may be, whatever He may do, the Displeasure of the tremendous *JEHOVAH* hangs over Him, like a most dreadful Sword. Which, if He dies in such a Condition, will inevitably fall upon him, and cut him in Pieces eternally.

† *Psal. lxii. 12*,

(says the Apostle, altering his Style, and making a very observable Distinction) the Gift of GOD is eternal Life *.

The inspired Writer subjoins, not *for*, but *according to* †, every Man's Works. A Man's Works are the Measure, not the meritorious Cause. To merit, is the sole Prerogative of the SAVIOUR's Blood and Obedience. To these it is owing, that our imperfect Services are honoured with any Acceptance; much more that they are recompensed with any Reward.—Though, after a Sinner is justified, his own Deeds find Favour in the Sight of the LORD: yet in the Justification of Sinners, GOD has no Respect to any human Performances. He has no Respect to one Man as better than another, but to the Righteousness of his blessed SON alone.

Ther. Does not this Exposition of yours, clash with that truly generous Acknowledgment of St. Peter? *In every Nation, He that feareth GOD, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted with Him* ‡. Here, it is undeniably evident, that Acceptance with our CREATOR, is founded on a Man's own Piety, and personal Integrity; upon his *fearing GOD*, and *working Righteousness*.

Asp. Rightly to understand this Text, We should enquire into the Circumstances of the History.—The Apostle had been strongly and most unreasonably prejudiced in favour of the *Jews*; imagining, that the
Salvation

* Rom. vi. 23.

† כל מעשיו, not במעשיו. So the Apostle speaks. Every Man shall receive his own Reward, κατὰ, not διὰ τοῦ δικαιώματός σου. — 1 Cor. iii. 8.

‡ Acts x. 35.

Salvation of *CHRIST*, like the Dispensation of *Moses*, must be confined to his Countrymen.—But now, having considered the Purport of his late heavenly Vision; having compared it with the angelic Message, delivered to *Cornelius*; and being made acquainted with the Character of that valuable Man; He breaks out into this truly catholic Declaration.—

“ My Prejudices are vanished. My Sentiments are enlarged. From the Instance before me, it is *de-*
monstrably certain; that the HOLY ONE of *Israel*, does no longer appropriate the Blessings of his Covenant, to any particular Person, Family, or People. *But, in every Nation, He that feareth GOD; and, from a Principle of Religion in the Heart, worketh Righteousness in the Life, is accepted with Him.* So accepted, as to be an Object of the Divine Favour, and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.”

This, I think, is the exact Meaning of the Place. And let it be recollected, that no One truly fears, or can possibly please GOD, without Faith *. That no Prayers can be set forth as the Incense; no Alms can go up as a Memorial before GOD; nor any Sacrifices be acceptable in his Sight, but only through *JESUS CHRIST*. For which Reasons, it seems necessary to suppose, that *Cornelius*, though a Heathen by Birth, had believed through Grace.—Nay; it is evident from the Context, that he had heard of *CHRIST*; had some Acquaintance with the Design of his Coming, and the Execution of his Office †; enough to be the Ground

of

* Heb. xi. 6.

† See *Ver.* 36, 37. Indeed it could hardly be otherwise; since *Cornelius* was stationed at *Cæsarea*; the Residence

of a *real*, though perhaps an *infantile* Faith. The Business of the Apostle was, to lead this Convert into the *clear* Light, and *full* Privileges of the Gospel; to ratify and confirm his Title to them, by the sacred *Seal* of Baptism; and introduce Him, as the *First-fruits* of the Gentiles, into the Christian Church.

Nothing therefore can be concluded from this Passage, but that the glad Tidings of *Christianity* are for *Jews*, for *Gentiles*, for all People—that, by Faith, even the Gentiles obtain a good Report, and are enabled to bring forth the Fruits of Righteousness—and Faith, though weak, yet if sincerely improved, will certainly be increased; will “go from Strength to Strength.”

Ther. Does not our SAVIOUR, in describing the Process, and foretelling the Issue of the last decisive Tryal, assign a Kingdom to the Righteous? Assign it in this precise View, as a proper Remuneration of *their own* good Works; saying, in the most express Terms; *Come, ye Blessed of my FATHER, inherit the Kingdom prepared for You, from the Foundation of the World: FOR I was an hungred, and Ye gave me Meat; FOR, &c. FOR, &c.* *

Asp. Be pleased to take notice of the Expression. They are bidden to *inherit*: and what is freer than an Inheritance? Was your Patrimony the Reward

of

dence of the *Lord Lieutenant*; and Seat of the *Civil*, as *Jerusalem* was of the *Ecclesiastical* Government. In a Place of such general Resort, so very remarkable an Event could not be unknown. Especially, as *Philip* the Evangelist had fixed his Abode in that City. See *Acts* viii. 40.

* Matt. xxv. 30.

of your own Services?—Observe also the *Reason* alledged, and compare it with the Rule of Judicature. *He that believeth*, saith the supreme JUDGE, *shall be saved*. This is the avowed, the invariable Standard, by which He proceeds, in administering everlasting Judgment. Accordingly, He confers eternal Life on the Righteous, as Persons intitled to this great Felicity, on the Foot of his own gracious Appointment.

FOR denotes, not the *Foundation*, but the *Evidence*, of their Right. “I acquit such a Person,” says the Arbitrator in a judicial Claim; “for the Witnesses depose, that the Debt is paid.” The Deposition, which answers to these righteous Acts, is the *Proof*; Payment of the Debt, which corresponds with *CHRIST*’s perfect Obedience, is the *Cause* * of the Discharge.—*For Ye have given*; Ye have abounded in all Instances of Duty to ME, and Love to your Brethren; and thereby have manifested Yourself true Believers.

It may be farther observed, That our LORD says not, Ye have done it to your Fellow-creatures, but to *these my Brethren* †. He commends not every random Act of Good-nature or Generosity, but such Kinds of Beneficence only, as carry the *Christian* Stamp; were exercised to a Disciple, “in the Name of a Disciple.” And *these* most evidently spring

* The Spring is come, says the Countryman; for the Orchard blooms, and the Black-bird sings. The Blooming of the Trees, and the Melody of the Birds, were never supposed to *create*, only to *characterize*, the delightful Season. They are, not its Cause, but the Proof of its taking place.

† Matt. xxv. 40.

spring from Faith; *these* undeniably attest its Sincerity.

Ther. Are not these Distinctions more *subtle*, than solid?

Ass. To me they appear in no such Light. If You think otherwise, let Us appeal to those excellent Persons themselves. The Turn, the very remarkable Turn of their Sentiments, will fully decide our Question.—Do they lay *any Stress* upon their own religious Duties, and beneficent Deeds? Far from relying on them, farther still from pleading them, they bestow not a *single Thought* upon them. Having fixed their Hopes on the ROCK of Ages, they forget these transient Bubbles *. Nay, they *wonder* to hear their exalted MASTER, making any honourable Mention of such defective Services.

O! that We may be enabled, through the whole Course of our Lives, to follow the Example of their Piety; and, when We appear before the tremendous Tribunal, to imitate their Humility and Wisdom! *Their Humility*; in renouncing themselves, and disclaiming all Desert of their own. *Their Wisdom*; in reposing their whole Confidence, on the Righteousness of their GOD and SAVIOUR.

Ther. Our LORD makes no Mention of this Doctrine, in his Sermon on the Mount. Whereas, if it had been so *very material*, He would at least have touched

* *Bubbles* they are, compared with the all-glorious Obedience of *CHRIST*; or considered in reference to the grand Affair of Justification before GOD.—But as Bubbles, or watery Vesicles inflated with Air, are the Means of exhibiting the beautiful Colours of the *Rainbow*; so these Services, though poor and imperfect, bear Testimony to the Existence of that precious Grace—*Faith*.

touched upon it, in that comprehensive Summary of true Religion.

Asp. Our LORD says not a Word, concerning the Sacrifice of his Death. Neither is there a Syl-
lable, relating to his Intercession for Transgressors. But are these Articles of our *Faith* to be deemed fictitious or superfluous? Because, they are not expressly inculcated, in that admirable Treatise of *practical Divinity*?

However, upon a more attentive Examination, perhaps, We shall find the Point most strongly *implied*, though not distinctly *specified*; its Necessity demonstrated, though its Nature be not explained. —The illustrious TEACHER opened his Mouth, and with a peculiar Solemnity said; *Blessed are the Poor in Spirit* *. —But *Who* are they? Not the Persons, who soothe themselves with the flattering Conceit of the *Laodicean Church*; *I am rich in Obedience, and increased in spiritual Goods* †. Those rather, who see their Indigence; bewail their Guilt; and hunger and thirst after the justifying Merit of a REDEEMER. Who, from the very Bottom of an humbled Heart, confess; “ LORD, I am no
“ more able to keep every Jot and Tittle of thy
“ holy Law, than I am capable of atoning for my
“ innumerable Sins. CHRIST must be my Right-
“ teousness, as well as my Propitiation, or else I am
“ irrecoverably undone.”

The inimitable PREACHER farther informs his Hearers; That, *unless their Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, they shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven* ‡. —How must Christians exceed the Pharisees? Not only in

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being

• Matt. v. 3.

† Rev. iii. 17.

‡ Matt. v. 20.

being *sincere*; in having Respect unto *all* GOD's Commandments; but also in possessing a *complete* Righteousness. He speaks of that Righteousness, by which Men enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. He speaks of such a Righteousness, as is described in the following Parts of the Sermon, and exactly corresponds with the Demands of the Law. He speaks of such a Righteousness, as admits of no Failure, but arises to the very Summit of Perfection. And where, where will You *find* this Righteousness, unless You have Recourse to the consummate Obedience of the great MEDIATOR?

Ther. The ORACLE of Heaven, You know, was once consulted upon that most momentous of all Questions; How a Person may ascertain his Title to Life and Immortality? And what is the Tenour of the sacred Rescript?—We are referred to the Ten Commandments; and, in the most explicit Terms, with the most peremptory Air, told; *This do, and thou shalt live* *.

Asp. That particular Person, if You please, was referred to the Ten Commandments; not *We*, and Mankind in general.—Our LORD, in the preceding Verses, had informed his Disciples; That they must *receive the Kingdom of GOD*, or the Grace of the Gospel, and the Blessings it proposes, *as a little Child*. And this can hardly signify, as the Result or Consequence of their own Doings.

Ther. “That particular Person referred! Not *We* and Mankind in general!”—I don't understand your Meaning, *Aspasio*.

Asp. You will observe then, that our LORD's Reply was not an universal Direction, but an Answer

swer *ad Hominem*; peculiarly adapted * to the young Gentleman's Application. Which, however it may be admired, was none of the wisest.—Instead of asking; “How shall a *poor guilty* Mortal, who is every Day offending, obtain Forgiveness from the righteous GOD?” Instead of saying; “How shall I, who am not able to think a *good Thought*, make sure my Title to an eternal Weight of Glory?” Our Querist demands; *What good Thing shall I do, that I may inherit eternal Life?* The Reply proceeds upon the Enquirer's own Principles.—“If You expect Life and Immortality, upon such *legal* Terms; know, that your Obedience must be nothing less, than a *perfect* Conformity to the divine Law. Perform all its Precepts, in their utmost Extent, and with an unremitted Perseverance, then”—But alas! such Perfection is too high for fallen Creatures; they cannot attain unto it. Necessarily, therefore, must they drop all such Pretensions, and have recourse to some other Method of Justification.

Ther. Why did that “Wonderful COUNSELLOR,” if such was the Purport of his

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Answer,

* It is delightful to observe the *ποικιλία* *Copia*, the *curious Variety*, yet the *consummate Propriety*, of our LORD's Conduct; how exactly this divine Casuist suits his Counsel, to the different States, and various Characters of Mankind.—The Secure and Presumptuous He sends to the *Law*, that they may be *humbled*. To the Afflicted and Contrite He preaches the *Gospel*, that they may be *comforted*.—When the *Pharisee*, full of Self-conceit, stands up and says, *What shall I do?* The Answer is, *Do all that is commanded*. When the sinful Woman falls at the REDEEMER's Feet, and speaks in Tears the Guilt of her Life; *Thy Sins are forgiven*, is the gracious Reply.

Answer, express Himself so obscurely? Why did He not divert his promising Scholar from this fruitless Attempt; and put Him in the right, the practicable Way of obtaining Salvation?

Ans. This He did, with the finest Address, and in the most skilful Manner.—Had our LORD affirmed, “You are worldly; You are covetous; “your Riches are your GOD:” such a Charge would, in all Probability, have been as confidently denied, as it was plainly urged. Therefore He brings this specious Hypocrite to a *Test**, which could not be evaded, and which was sure to discover the Truth. A Test, which laid open the palpable and enormous Defects of his so much boasted Obedience. Which made it appear, that, instead of keeping *all* the Commandments, this vain Self-justiciary had not obeyed the very *first*. But, amidst all his towering Imaginations of Himself, had been, and at that very Instant was, a sordid groveling Idolater: who preferred his transitory Possessions on Earth, to an everlasting Inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven.—Could any Expedient be more suitable to the Case? Or better calculated to reduce Him, intoxicated as He was with Pride, to a sober humble Mind? To beat Him off from his false Foundation, *the Righteousness which is of the Law*; and lead Him to a Reliance on the promised, the expected, the present MESSIAH?

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* *Matt. xix. 21. If Thou wilt be perfect, sell all that Thou hast, and give to the Poor.* This Direction seems to be much of the same Nature, with that other Part of our LORD's Reply, *If Thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments.* Both were personal; both occasional; both adapted to particular Circumstances. The latter is no more the stated evangelical Way to Heaven, than the former is the common indispensable Duty of all Christians.

It puts me in mind of my Friend *Sagacio's* Conduct. Which seems to have some Conformity with our LORD's Procedure; and may, possibly, tend to illustrate its Propriety.—Visiting one of his unlearned Neighbours, He found Him in Company with a certain talkative Stranger; who was haranguing, at an *extravagant* Rate, on the Wonders of Astronomy.—*Sagacio* soon perceived, that the chief Furniture of this extraordinary Adept, lay in a little Acquaintance with the technical Terms, and somewhat more than a little Share of Assurance. How should He bring the self-plumed Sciolist to a little *Modesty* of Sentiment, and *Decorum* of Conversation? He took leave to ask, “What the Word *Astronomy* might signify?” The Orator was struck dumb in a Moment. He had never informed Himself, it seems, that Astronomy related to the Order and Regulation of the Stars. This single Question taught our minute Philosopher, more effectually than twenty Lectures on the Subject. It taught Him his *own Ignorance*; and that He had the very Rudiments of his so much admired Science still to learn.

Ther. What will You say to those famous Passages in the Epistle of St. *James*? *By Works a Man is justified. Was not Abraham our Father justified by Works**? Can any Words be plainer in their Meaning? Or, can any Meaning be more directly opposite to the whole Scope of your Argumentation?

Asp. This I would say, *Theron*.—The Passages You quote, when detached from the Context, may *seem* inconsistent with the Declarations of another Apostle. As a Limb, when *wrenched* from its natural Situation, appears

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* Jam. ii. 21, 24.

appears with an Air of Disproportion. Whereas, reduce the dislocated Part, and it will recover the Symmetry of its Shape; it will harmonize exactly with the animal System.—Replace likewise these Assertions; consider them in Connection with the whole Paragraph; and they will be found, if not Unisons, yet perfect Concords, with the Strain of St. Paul's Teaching.

What is the Drift and Aim of St. James? To distinguish a genuine from an insincere Faith. Observe, how He states the Case. It is not, *Though a Man have Faith*; but *Though a Man say, He hath Faith**. This is mentioned, as the Boast of some hypocritical Professor. So that the Apostle is evidently dealing with a Pretender to the precious Gift. Accordingly He demands, with great Propriety and Spirit; *Shew me thy Faith*. Prove the Reality of thy Claim. Prove it to me, and to the Church; to thy Fellow-creatures, and Fellow-christians. What Thou callest thy Faith, if it be not productive of righteous Dispositions and godly Works, We must pronounce spurious, worthless, dead.

Having detected the Counterfeit, He proceeds to describe the Sterling. The grand Characteristic of which is, A Frame of Mind and a Course of Action, corresponding with the Doctrine believed. By this Touchstone the Faith of our renowned Progenitor was tried; and, being tried, was "found unto Praise, "and Honour, and Glory." *Was not Abraham our Father justified by Works, when He had offered Isaac his Son upon the Altar?*—Justified! How? As to Acceptance with the Supreme JUDGE? No: this was effected long before Isaac was offered, was born,

* Jam. ii. 14.

born, or conceived in the Womb. But when the believing and justified Patriarch, exercised that Heroic Act of Self-denial, Resignation, and Obedience; then He demonstrated Himself, to be a real unfeigned Believer; then his Justification was evidenced, to all his Cotemporaries, and to all Generations. By this, and such other Works, his *Faith was made perfect* *; answered its proper End; appeared to be of the true, the triumphant, the scriptural Kind; since it overcame the World, overcame Self, and regarded GOD as All in All.

Upon the whole; St. Paul speaks concerning the Justification of our *Persons*; St. James concerning the Justification of our *Faith* †.—St. Paul describes the *Manner* of being justified, before the all-seeing GOD; St. James points out the *Proof* ‡ of a justified

* *Ετελειωθη*. In this Sense, I suppose, We are to understand St. John's Aphorism. *He that doeth Righteousness, is righteous*; is undoubtedly justified; is righteous before GOD, the Searcher of Hearts. This his holy Life demonstrates, that He has indeed *believed unto Righteousness*. It justifies his Profession of Faith, both from the Charge, and from the Suspicion of Insincerity. 1 John iii. 7.

† That the Expression used by St. James, signifies this *declarative* Justification, is plain from 1 Tim. iii. 16. Where the Apostle, speaking of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, says; *εδικαιωθη*, He was justified in or by the SPIRIT: that is, He was declared to be the true SON of GOD; manifested on Earth, and recognized from Heaven, as the undoubted SAVIOUR of the World.

‡ A very little Reflection, I should imagine, must convince every unprejudiced Reader; That St. James cannot possibly be stating the Method of Justification, before the infinitely righteous GOD. Because, He never so much as mentions the Death of CHRIST—*Who made his Soul an Offering for Sin—to whom give all the Prophets witness, that whosoever believeth in Him, shall receive Remission*

tified State, as it is visible to Men; *Seeft Thou.*—The former proceeds from the immaculate Righteousness of *CHRIST*, placed to our Account; the latter consists in the Fruits of Righteousness, adorning our Life.—Rightly understood, therefore, these Passages are not in the least contradictory to the Epistles of St. *Paul*, or to the Scope of my Argumentation. But are a seasonable Caveat and a proper Preservative, against misunderstanding *those*, or perverting *this*.

Ther. I wish, you would read that concise, but judicious Abridgment of true Religion, comprised in the fifteenth *Psalms*. The sacred Penman, for his own and for the Information of all Mankind, asks; *LORD, who shall dwell in thy Tabernacle, or who shall rest upon thy holy Hill?* To this most interesting Enquiry, the following Verses are a full and satisfactory Answer. The whole of which turns upon the Discharge of moral Duties; *walking uprightly, and working Righteousness*. Without a Syllable, or a single Hint, concerning the very superior Excellence of Faith, or the extreme Necessity of a vicarious Obedience.

Asp. I have often read, and I well remember, that instructive *Psalms*. And I beg leave to observe, once for all, with relation to such Passages of the Old Testament; That they suppose the Persons, whom they describe, to be convinced of their *natural Corruption*; to be humbled under a Sense of their

mission of Sins—and besides whom, there is no other Name given under Heaven, whereby We can be saved.—Could an Apostle so absolutely forget his *LORD*; and in a Case, where every other inspired Writer acknowledges Him; nay, acknowledges Him to be *ALL IN ALL*?

their *actual* Guilt; and to live in a conscientious Observance of the *expiatory* Sacrifices. All which had an invariable Reference to *CHRIST*, and derived their whole Virtue from his Mediation.

Would any of the *Jewish* Saints, have dared to advance a Plea for eternal Blessedness, upon the Foot of their own Conformity to such *moral* Directions? Neglecting, at the same Time, the Sacrifices of the three great Festivals, or a believing Improvement of the daily Oblation.—By no means. They were, and they would acknowledge themselves, deplorably defective. They would plead the Promise of free Grace, and fly to the Blood, which *GOD* himself had appointed to make an *Atonement* for their Souls.—By such Sentiments and such a Conduct, they reduced to Practice the very Essence of our Doctrine: disavowing their own Deeds, however virtuous or religious; and trusting in the Strength of *Israel*, the *LORD* our *Righteousness*. Who alone fulfilled all the Precepts, contained in this excellent Formulary of Duty. Who was also the *Substance* of every purifying and of every propitiatory Rite. Whom, therefore, those holy People regarded, as the only Cause of Justification and Salvation.

Ther. Has not the sacred Writer expressly said, at the Close of the *Psalms*? *Whoso DOETH these Things, shall never fall.*

Asp. He has: And this, I apprehend, is his Meaning.—“Persons of such a Temper, and such a Practice, bear the Marks of *GOD*’s Children, and “are meet for his Glory. Accordingly, they shall “never fall, either into total Apostacy here, or “final Condemnation hereafter. They are now
“Heirs,

“Heirs, and in due Time shall be Possessors, of
“his eternal Kingdom.”

But you will take notice, that all these Duties and Qualifications, only *characterize*, not *constitute*, the Inheritor of Heaven.—You will likewise advert to another very remarkable Circumstance in the Description; *He setteth not by Himself, but is lowly in his own Eyes* *. Or, as the more expressive Original speaks, He is *despicable* and *vile* in his own Sight. So far from aspiring to Self-justification, that He even condemns and abhors Himself. He falls down, as a most unworthy Wretch, at the Foot of infinitely free Grace.

Ther. I cannot but think, it is the *current Doctrine* of Scripture, and I am sure, it is one of the *first Principles* which the Light of Nature teaches—That the most high GOD must necessarily love Righteousness, and take pleasure in the Righteous.

Asp. If, what is called, the Light of Nature was to publish a Gospel, I believe, it would be formed upon your Plan. It would bestow Favour only on

• *Psal.* xv. 4. נבחר בעיני נאמא. I cannot say, that I admire the Bible Translation of this Clause: *In whose Eyes the vile Person is contemptible*. Methinks, it does not favour of the tender and benign Spirit of our Religion, which teaches Us to *honour all Men*; to despise no one's *Person*, but only to detest the *Wickedness* of the Wicked. Should the Sense I have opposed, have its Weight; the Sense I have preferred, is incomparably *weightier*. If, to despise the *Vile*, is a religious Act; to think *meanly* of Ourselves, is a much more advanced, and a far more difficult Instance of true Religion. This is to copy one of the highest Patterns of human Excellence; who, notwithstanding his very superior Attainments, accounted *Himself less than the least of all Saints*; nay, *the very chiefest of Sinners*.

on the *Innocent*, the *Virtuous*, and the *Holy*.—But the Gospel of *CHRIST* runs in a very different Strain. This brings Pardon for the Condemned, and Blessings for the Accursed. This is Health to the Sick, and Recovery to the Ruined. *The LORD hath anointed me*, saith its divine *AUTHOR*, *to preach good Tidings to the Meek*; to the Poor, the Afflicted, the Miserable.—*He hath sent me to bind up the Broken-hearted*; whose Misery is so great, that it seems to admit of no Relief; but is plunging them in Despair, and even breaking their Hearts—to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, the wretched Captives of Sin, and Death, and Hell—and the Opening of the Prison to them that are bound; bound in the Chains of Ignorance, Impotence, and Misery *.

As

* *Isai. lxi. 1.* Upon this Passage of *Isaiah* I would beg Leave to observe; That the Word *Meek* seems not to answer or convey the Prophet's Idea. By the *Meek*, We are inclined to think of Persons, endued with that placid and quiet Spirit; which is, in the Sight of *GOD*, of great Price. This might discourage many People, who know themselves to be destitute of such a gracious Habit. This might lead Others to suspect, that some amiable Disposition is *previously* necessary, in order to receive the Benefits of redeeming Grace. Which is a very mistaken, and will prove a most forbidding Notion.

The Original *עני* signifies, in this Place, *The Afflicted*; not those who are beautified with Meekness, but those who are oppressed with Misery; spiritual Misery especially; not excepting even those, who are Slaves to their own unruly Passions.—The Word *עני*, from which *עני* is derived, expresses that bitter Bondage and grievous Oppression, under which the *Israelites* groaned in *Egypt*. See *Exod. iii. 7.*

The whole Paragraph is a Description of extreme Wretchedness. What can be more distressed than the Man,

As I am myself a most unworthy Sinner, You must not be displeased, if I espouse the Cause of such unhappy Creatures. Yet, though a Friend of Sinners, I am no Enemy to the Righteous. I entirely agree with my *Theron*, that the most High GOD necessarily loves Righteousness. Only I want to be informed, *Where* this excellent and lovely Quality is to be found?—Not among the *Gentiles*. They have swerved from the Dictates of natural Conscience.—Not among the *Jews*. They have broke the holy Commandment delivered on Mount *Sinai*.—Not among *Christians*. For, if GOD should enter into Judgment with Us, We could not answer Him one of a Thousand.—In the Kingdom of *Æthiopia*, or in the Country of the *Moors*, where will You find the *native Whites*?

The SAVIOUR of the World, who overlooked nothing valuable, not so much as the Widow's Mite, saw none among the Race of *Adam*, that were entitled to the Character of *Righteous*. He who gave Himself a Ransom for all, makes no Application to such Persons *. They lay quite beyond the Line of his Commission.—Why? Because He had a Quarrel with real Godliness? Because He sullenly *disesteemed* personal Goodness? Or was unable to *distinguish* the Excellency of inherent

Man, whose outward Circumstances are impoverished and ruined; whose Spirit is *broken* under the Weight of his Calamities; who is taken *Captive* by the Enemy, is thrown into a *Dungeon*, and loaded with *Irons*?—This is the Prophet's Representation; this is the Picture of unconverted Sinners; and to these, to these CHRIST JESUS is a Ransom, a Deliverer, a Portion.

* *Matt. ix. 13. I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.*

herent Virtue?—No verily. But because He knew, that, amiable as these Qualifications are, they have no Existence in the human Heart; till the Sinner, reconciled by his Death, be sanctified also by his SPIRIT.

You remember, perhaps, that remarkable Answer, which the *Spartans* returned to a threatening Embassy, sent by *Philip* the formidable King of *Macedon*. Nothing could be more concise; and, I think, nothing was ever more spirited and significant.

Ther. *Philip* gave them to understand by his Ambassadors; “That, if He entered their Territories, “He would burn their Towns; put the Inhabitants to the Sword; and spread Destruction, “where-ever He advanced.”—To which insolent and cruel Menace, the brave *Lacedæmonians* made no other Reply, than—IF.

Is this the Story, to which You refer?

Asp. The very same.—And when you are speaking of human Righteousness, as the Cause of our Acceptance with the eternal GOD, I would borrow the Language of a *Spartan*. IF, shall be my Reply.—If, seclusive of the Obedience, and independent on the SPIRIT of CHRIST, You can furnish Yourself with this Endowment: Or, if You can carry your Righteousness to that Perfection, which may equal the Purity of the Law, and comport with the Majesty of the LAW GIVER: then trust in it; let it be the Ground of your Confidence; and seek no better Foundation.

But whoever shall, in this Manner, seek for his Recommendation to the Favour of GOD; will act like the mistaken Countryman in *Horace*. Who,
2
being

302 DIALOGUE VI.

being unable to ford the River, took up a Resolution to wait, till the Stream was all run by:

At illa

Labitur, & labetur in omne volubilis Ævum.

Ther. Here, I fanſy, We muſt take leave of your Countryman. If He adheres to his Reſolution, We ſhall find Him in the very ſame Situation, when Breakfast is over; and may reſume our Subject, juſt where it is diſcontinued.

• *Vain Man, deſiſt: Such flatt'ring Hopes forego:
It flows, and flows, and will for ever flow.*



A-T-D



DIALOGUE VII.

THE RON.



O me, who have spent the greatest Part of the Winter in *Town*, these Scenes of the *Country* are inexpressibly pleasing. Take, who will, the gilded Saloon, and the filken Settee; so long as I can shelter myself under the Canopy of such a spreading Beech, and use one of its coarse, mis-shapen Roots for my Seat.

'Tis true, We see no longer those splendid Brocades, and elegant Toupees, which distinguish the *Park* and the *Mall*.—But we have, full in our View, a Multitude of honest Rustics; pursuing their chearful Labours in yonder *Meadow*. Some, mowing the luxuriant Herbage. Some, spreading it to the Sun, or raising it into regular Cocks. Others, loading their Waggon with the Hay, or clearing the Ground with their Rakes. The Ground, cleared of its soft Incumbrance, appears fresh and green, like another Spring. While the Exhalations of the tedded Grass, floating in the Air, give a rural Per-

funne to the Gale.—And which, my *Aspasio*, which are the most valuable Objects? The *little Labourers* of the Hive, that enrich themselves and regale their Masters? Or the *gay Flutterers* of the Garden, whose whole Life is nothing but Sport; and their highest Character is, to be insignificantly pretty?

Asp. I understand you, *Theron*, and have the Satisfaction to agree with You.—In this Retirement, We hear none of the wanton and corrupting *Airs* of the *Opera*; no, nor the majestic and ennobling Melody of the *Oratorio* *.—But We have a Band of Music, stationed in the Grove; and a Concert of native Harmony, warbling from the Boughs. We are entertained with the Music, which charmed the human Ear, long before † *Jubal* found out his Instruments; and Thousands of Years before *Handel* composed his Notes.—The Bullfinch, and a Multitude of little tuneful Throats, strike the Key. The Thrush below, and the Sky-lark responsive from above, *diversify* and *exalt* the Strain. The Black-bird, somewhat like the solemn Organ, with Notes perfectly mellow, and gracefully sonorous, crowns the Choir. While the Turtle's melancholy Voice, and the murmuring Water's plaintive Tone, *deepen* and *complete* the universal Symphony.

This

* *Majestic and ennobling*.—This, I think, is the true Character, and expresses the real Tendency, of the *Oratorio*. Nevertheless, it may not be improper to observe; that if We carry a trifling or irreligious Spirit to the Entertainment; if We attend to the musical *Airs*, but disregard those sacred Truths, which enter into the Composition; such a Behaviour will be little better than a *Profanation* of holy Things. I fear, it will be one Species of *taking GOD's* adorable and glorious Name *in vain*.

† Gen. iv. 21.

This Music constituted the first Song of Thanksgiving, and formed the first vocal Praise, which the All-gracious CREATOR received, from his new-made World. This is neither the Parent of Effeminacy, nor a Pander for Vice; but refines the Affections, even while it amuses the Imagination.

Ther. Yes; all the Entertainments of Nature, are calculated to secure our Innocence, as well as to gratify our Fancy. And what is another very agreeable Circumstance, these Gratifications which afford the sublimest Pleasure, are exhibited *gratis*. While those, which enervate the Mind, and debauch the Affections, must be *dearly purchased*.—Every one cannot gain Admittance into the Boxes or the Pit, when some celebrated *Tragedy* is brought upon the Stage. But every one may behold the beauteous Exhibitions of *Spring*, and the finished Productions of *Autumn*. All may contemplate the Machinery of Nature, and the Wonders of Creation. Thereby enjoying a far more exquisite Amusement, without any of the Guilt, or any of the Danger.

The Inhabitants of yonder Villages, have never beheld the splendid Procession, which solemnizes the Coronation of a Monarch; nor the *gaudy Illuminations*, which distinguish the Anniversary of his Birth. But they see, almost every Morning, a much nobler Spectacle displayed in the East. They see the great *Ruler* of the *Day*, or rather the Envoy from Day's eternal SOVEREIGN, making his Entry amidst the Spaces of the Sky.—The Heavens are strewed with Colours, which outvie the Pinks and Carnations. The Grass is decked with Dew-drops, and every Plant is strung, as it were, with Pearls. All

around the Darkness retires, and sweet refreshing Gales arise.—At length the magnificent Luminary appears. And what is all the ostentatious Pomp of Kings? What is all the Glitter of the most brilliant Courts? Compared with his transcendent Lustre?—This Spectacle we may behold, without Loss of Time, or Prejudice to Health. Nay, We cannot behold it, without *improving* one, and *redeeming* the other. So beneficial are even the Pleasures, which Nature yields! So serviceable the very Diversions, to which she invites!

Asp. Thus gracious is the Almighty MAKER, in the Constitution of *material* Things. The Substantial and the Valuable, are open to every One; are accessible by all. Only the Tinsel and the Trappings, are the Property of a Few; the poor Prerogative of Wealth.

No less gracious is GOD, in the Disposal of *spiritual* Favours. These, though infinitely more excellent, yet are equally free. We are invited to *buy them, without Money, and without Price* *.—What do you give for the Benefits of the rising Sun, or the Delights of this rural Melody? The Case is much the same, with regard to the Righteousness, by which We are justified, and all the Blessings of Salvation.

Ther. This brings to our Remembrance the Countryman, whom we left on the Banks of the River. And, for aught I can see, *Theron* and the Rustic are pretty much upon a footing. The first, as far from acceding to your Notions; as the last, is from gaining his Point.

Asp.

* *Isai.* lv. 1.

Asp. Have you any Objection, *Theron*, to these Gifts of Nature; because, they are neither purchased by your Money, nor produced by your own Toil?

Ther. But who can ever expect to obtain Pardon, and Peace, and eternal Salvation, at so cheap a Rate? It seems to be all Delusion, *Aspasio*.

Asp. So cheap! Then You would pay somewhat, I perceive, by way of Price.—But give me leave to ask; What Price did you pay to GOD your MAKER, for fashioning You in your Mother's Womb? What Price have you paid to GOD your PRESERVER, for upholding You ever since You was born? Or what Price do You think of paying to GOD the supreme PROPRIETOR, for the Ground, on which You tread; for the Air, in which You breathe; for the Light, by which You see? Just the *same* Price must You advance to GOD your SAVIOUR, for all his justifying Merits.

Both *these* and *those* proceed from the same BENEFACTOR. They are all absolutely necessary, either for the Welfare of the Body, or the Happiness of the Soul. And they are all vouchsafed on the same Terms; or rather, in the same Way of Sovereign Bounty. For thus saith the Prophet; *His Going-forth, in the Dispensation of the Gospel, is prepared as the Morning. CHRIST, with all his precious Privileges, shall come unto Us as the Rain* *.—As freely, as the Light shines, or the Showers fall. However, if You are acquainted with a different, or a better Way, be so good as to communicate your Knowledge.

Ther. Some, You may observe, expect Salvation, on account of their *inoffensive* Behaviour. They live peaceably. They do no Harm to their Neighbours.

X 2

They

* Hof. vi. 3.

They are guilty of no gross Offence against GOD. And why should they not hope to obtain his Favour?—They apprehend, the Prophet *Samuel* establishes their Hope, when He makes this solemn Appeal; *Whose Ass have I taken? Whose Ox have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded*?*—Nay, they imagine, that our LORD himself has authorized their Expectation, by giving this Character of *Nathaniel*; *An Israelite indeed, in whom is no Guile†.*—A Freedom from outward Injustice and inward Hypocrisy, is all the Qualification applauded in the one Case, avowed in the other.

Ass. This negative Goodness (if it deserves to be called Goodness) was a Plea for the empty *Pharisee*. But None, I presume, would choose to be associated with *such* a Companion, either in Character Here, or in Condition Hereafter.

Samuel, in the Place You mention, is vindicating Himself, only to his *Fellow-creatures*, and only in the Capacity of a *Magistrate*. He speaks not of his Justification before the JUDGE of Quick and Dead. This, He well knew, must be derived from another Source, and must rest upon a firmer Bottom.

The Israelite without Guile, was a Person, who not only abstained from every Sin, but performed every Duty; and without any *wilful Neglect* of the One, or any *allowed Indulgence* of the Other. This Instance, therefore, will by no means prove the Sufficiency of your negative Righteousness. Which seems to have just the same Degree of Excellency, as a Fountain that never issues in Water, or as a Cloud that never descends in Rain †.

Ther.

* 1 Sam. xii. 3.

† John i. 47.

† *Vel Lyra quæ reticet, vel qui non tenditur Arcus.*

CLAUDIAN.

Ther. In this Particular, *Aspasio*, your Sentiments are mine.—But I would add *Morality* to Civility; the virtuous to the inoffensive Conversation. And if We not only cease to do Evil, but learn to do well: if we use Temperance, exercise Charity, and keep all the Commandments to the *best of our Power*, is not this a sufficient Foundation for our Hope?

Asp. Yes, *Theron*; if, as you add *Morality* to your Civility, you add *Perfection* to both. Otherwise you must be ranked, not among the Claimants, but among the Delinquents. You have no Title to a Reward, but stand in need of Pardon.

It is a Principle of Justice, founded on the unalterable Constitution of Things, That the Debtor be acquitted, when He has paid the Debt. But supposing Him, instead of Gold to bring Iron; instead of Talents to return Pence; instead of defraying, to increase the Score daily; can He *then* reasonably expect, or legally claim a Discharge?

With respect to such an Obedience, We may pass our Verdict in the figurative, but very expressive Language of *Isaiah*: *The Bed is shorter, than that a Man can stretch Himself on it; and the Covering narrower, than that He can wrap Himself in it* *. It can neither give Rest to the alarmed Conscience, nor afford Protection to the guilty Soul. If We have nothing better to plead, We shall not be able to lift up our Heads, in the last decisive Judgment; but *must enter into the Rock, and hide Ourselves in the Dust, for Fear of the LORD, and for the Glory of his Majesty* †.

Ther. We will go a Step farther, and take in the Exercise of *Devotion*. We will read GOD's Word;

X 3

pray

* *Isai.* xxviii. 20. † *Isai.* ii. 10.

pray to his Divine MAJESTY; and regularly attend on his public Worship.—Here now, are social Accomplishments and moral Virtues, completed by the Performance of religious Duties.

Asp. Completed!—I fear, that Expression will scarcely abide the Test of a single Query. Have You then performed all your Duties, with that ardent Love of GOD, and undivided View to his Glory? With that adoring Gratitude to the blessed JESUS, and that child-like Dependence on his SPIRIT? Which the Nature of Things requires, and the Scriptures of Truth enjoin?—If not; your Duties, be they moral, or religious, or both, are far from being complete. Nay; they are utterly defective; and, for that Reason, absolutely insufficient for your Justification. They are clipped or sophisticated Coin. And will that be *current* in the World of Glory?

Ther. Allowing them to be defective, they are at least *sincere*. And though not free from all Alloy, yet if they bear the Image and Superscription of Integrity, why should they be rejected, as “reprobate Silver*?” Why should they not obtain the Currency, You mention?

Asp. “Alas!”—says a judicious and admired Writer—“The Imperfections of our best Services daily *forfeit* the Blessings of *Time*. How impossible then is it, that the Sincerity of them, amidst so many Frailties and Defects, should *purchase* the Glories of *Eternity*!”

Ther. Be your Writer ever so judicious, I can confront Him with Others, equally capable of judging, and diametrically opposite in Opinion.—What says that wise and brave Man, the Successor of *Moses*, and Generalissimo

* Jer. vi. 30.

Generalissimo of the Armies of *Israel*? *Joshua*, I am sure, declares Himself on my Side. *Fear the LORD, and serve Him in Sincerity* *, is his last solemn Charge to the People.—Even the great Apostle, on a Review of his Ministry, makes it Matter of Self-gratulation, That He *had his Conversation in godly Sincerity* †.

Asp. You have quoted the Charge, delivered by the Servant, be pleased to recollect the Protestation, made by the Master: *Not for thy Righteousness*, says *Moses*, *or for the Uprightness of thy Heart, dost Thou go to possess their Land* ‡. Even an earthly *Canaan* was not given to the *Israelites*, as the Reward of their own, either outward Obedience, or inward Sincerity. Much less can We expect the Kingdom of Immortality, on Account of any Uprightness of our Intentions, or Piety of our Actions.

However, as the Doctrine of Sincerity is the favourite and the fashionable Tenet, I will conform a little to the Taste in Vogue. You shall have no Reason to complain, That I am either a *Cynic* or a *Stoic* §.—Let it suffice Us to be sincere. Only let Us refer Ourselves to the Apostle, for a Description of this darling Qualification. *That Ye may be sincere, being filled with the Fruits of Righteousness, which are by JESUS CHRIST, unto the Praise and Glory of GOD* §.

Here are three Properties of acceptable Sincerity.—It must bear Fruits, *the Fruits of Righteousness*; and bear them abundantly, so that We may be *filled* with them.—The Branch and the Fruits must derive,

X 4

that

* Josh. xxiv. 14.
ix. 5.

† 2 Cor. i. 12.

‡ Deut.

§ The *Cynic* had no Complaisance, the *Stoic* was quite inflexible.

§ Phil. i. 10, 11.

that its Vigour, these their Flavour, and both of them their very Being, from the all-supporting, all-supplying Root CHRIST JESUS.—Then, instead of terminating in Self-justification, they must redound to the Honour of GOD. It is not said, These shall *justify* You, but these shall *glorify* your FATHER which is in Heaven.

This Kind of Sincerity, can never be too highly esteemed, nor too zealously encouraged. But this, You will observe, flows from the Grace of *CHRIST*, and issues in the Glory of GOD. Therefore does but very poorly attest, either the Sufficiency of *human Ability*, to perform good Works; or the Sufficiency of *human Works*, to win the Prize of our High Calling.

Ther. Do you then exclude all Works? Will You make a mere Nothing, both of *our* moral Endowments, and of *your* evangelical Obedience?

Asp. They are excluded, both the one and the other, from all Share in justifying Us. Yet not by me, but by an Authority, to which there can be no Objection, from which there lies no Appeal. Speaking of Salvation, thus saith the Wisdom of GOD; *Not of Works*—

Ther. Works of the *ceremonial* Law, I suppose. These, we all acknowledge, are, under the Christian Dispensation, as a Bond canceled, or as an Act repealed. But sure You will assign a better Office, sure You will allow a nobler Character, to that Course of Obedience, which proceeds upon the Obligations of Morality; nay more, is regulated by the Commands of *CHRIST*.

Asp. St. Paul will allow it no such Office, as that for which my *Theron* is pleading. *Ye are saved*, says the Apostle. Ye are delivered from Wrath, reconciled to GOD, and made Heirs of his Kingdom.—How? *By Grace, through Faith* *. *Grace*, like a magnificent Sovereign, from the Riches of his own Bounty, and without any Respect to human Worthiness, *confers* the glorious Gift. *Faith*, like an indigent Petitioner, with an empty Hand, and without any Pretence to personal Desert, *receives* the heavenly Blessing.

Both Grace and Faith stand in direct Opposition to Works; *all* Works whatever. Whether they be Works of the Law, or Works of the Gospel; Exercises of the Heart, or Actions of the Life; done in a State of Nature, or done under the Influences of the SPIRIT; they are all, and every of them, *equally* set aside in this great Affair.

Ther. Whence does it appear, that the Bill of Exclusion is thus extensive, or rather quite *unlimited*?

Asp. From the Reason assigned, and from the Caution suggested.

From the Reason assigned—*For We are his Workmanship*. We Believers. Of *such* Persons, and of *their* Obedience, the Apostle is speaking.—*Created in CHRIST JESUS unto good Works*. We are regenerated, and spiritually enlivened, not because We *have* performed them, but that We *may* perform them.—Not with any View of being justified by them, but only *that We may walk in them*; till We receive the End of our Faith, even the Salvation of our Souls.

From

* Eph. ii. 8.

From the Caution suggested—*Lest any Man should boast*. That all Pretence of Glorifying may be cut off from Man. Cut off from *Gentile*, from *Jew*, from *Christian*; without any Exception, or any Difference. Which could not be effected, if either moral Virtues, or *Mosaic* Ceremonies, or evangelical Duties, were admitted to bear a Part in justifying Sinners.—*Lest any Man should boast*: that the whole Honour of obtaining Salvation, may be appropriated to HIM, who *hid not his Face from Shame and Spitting*. And is He not worthy, infinitely worthy, to receive this unrivaled Honour, as a Recompence for his unparalleled Humiliation?

Ther. All our good Works, We allow, are recommended by *CHRIST*. They prevail for our Justification, only through his Merits. So that We still depend upon the REDEEMER. And, by this means, pay Him the highest Honour.

Asp. Depend upon the REDEEMER! No, my dear Friend. You act like the Persons, described by *Isaiah*; *We will eat our own Bread, and wear our own Apparel, only let Us be called by thy Name* *. Whereas, Faith addresses itself to *CHRIST*, in the very Reverse of this Language; *Thou hast Cloathing, be Thou our Ruler, and let this Ruin be under thy Hand* †. 'Tis thine, 'tis thine alone, to retrieve our desperate Affairs, and constitute Us righteous before GOD.

In Te tota Domus Spes inclinata recumbit.

Depend upon the REDEEMER! No, You rely upon your own pious Acts, and moral Qualifications. They, they are your grand Recommendation.

* *Isai.* iv. 1.

† *Isai.* iii. 6.

dition. While the Office, consigned over to the Divine *JESUS*, is nothing more than to be (as it were) *Master of the Ceremonies*. He has the Credit of introducing your fine Accomplishments, with a kind of graceful Air.—But is *this* an Office suited to his incomparable Dignity? Was it for *this*, that He bowed the Heavens, and partook of our Nature? Was it for *this*, that He became subject to the Law, and obedient unto Death? *Only* for *this*, that He might usher in our own Endowments, with a Plume and a Scarf?—Surely, *Theron*, You can never entertain such low Thoughts of the incarnate *GOD*, and his mediatorial Undertaking.

Ther. Neither can I entertain such *low* and *vili-fying* Thoughts of our own virtuous Attainments. They distinguish Persons of Eminence and Worth, from the sordid Wretch and execrable Villain; just as the noble Faculty of Reason, distinguishes the Man from the Brute.

Asp. To deny good Works the Merit of justifying Us, is very different from vilifying them.—You are going to build a new House, *Theron*. Pray, do You intend to hew your Timber, from the flimsy Tendrils of the Vine?

Ther. No, certainly *.

Asp. Because You don't think those feeble Shoots proper, to form the Beams, and support the Roof, of your intended Edifice; do You, therefore, slight them, depreciate them, or disallow their Usefulness?—By no means.—They may *beautify* your Walls, with

* *No, certainly.*—Perhaps, it may be worth our while to observe; That this is the Meaning of a very *obsolete* Expression, which occurs in our Translation of (*εκ οιδου*) *Luke xvii. 9. I throw not.*

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with their ornamental Spread ; and *enrich* your Desert, with their delicious Fruit. This is an Office, suitable to the Nature of the Plant : and from this it receives sufficient Estimation, without pretending to the Honours of the Oak.

Virtuous Attainments, I own, are a considerable Distinction, in the present State of Things. And, what is a higher Encomium (I shall now out-shoot You, in your own Bow) they will distinguish the true Believer from the hypocritical Professor, even at the great Tribunal.—But let them be content with their Province, and not intrude upon the SAVIOUR's Prerogative. To *effect* Justification, be *his* : to *discriminate* the Justified, *theirs*.—Neither let them elate their Possessors, with a vain Conceit of themselves. Who, though they were meek as *Moses*, holy as *Samuel*, and wise as *Daniel*, must confide in nothing, but the boundless Mercies of the LORD ; must plead nothing, but the infinite Merits of his *CHRIST*.

This is the Theology, both of the *Psalmist*, and of *St. Paul*. They derive the Blessedness promised in Scripture, not from the shallow Stream of human Accomplishments, but from the inexhaustible Ocean of divine Grace. *Blessed is He*, who worketh Righteousness, and abstaineth from Sin, that He may be justified ? No such Thing is affirmed. But—blessed is He *whose Unrighteousnesses are forgiven, and whose Sins are covered* *.

Ther. Will *Aspasio* then, like many of our modern Disputants, *mutilate* the holy Word ? Industrious display, what seems to strengthen his Argument ; but artfully secrete, what tends to overthrow his Scheme ?

How

* Psal. xxxii. 1. Rom. iv. 7.

How could You forget, or why should You suppress, the following Clause? *And in whose Spirit there is no Guile.*—Was You afraid, it would demolish your Opinion; and point out an *upright, honest* Mind, as the Cause of this Blessedness?

Asp. Far was I, my dear *Theron*, from any such groundless Apprehensions; and equally far from all such delusory Designs. *Shall I talk deceitfully for GOD *?* His sacred Cause can never need it; and his exalted Majesty infinitely disdains it. No: I would condemn my Tongue to eternal Silence, rather than speak a Syllable, either to conceal, or disguise the Truth.

Most readily We will admit the Sentence You mention: *In whose Spirit there is no Guile.* It is evident from the Context, That these Words are not descriptive of an unblameable Person, in whose Heart and Conversation there is no Iniquity; but of a penitent Sinner, whose Mouth freely *confesses* the Iniquity of them both. Confesses, without any Reserve, or the least Attempt to palliate.—Which, instead of invalidating, corroborates my Argument. Since, according to your own Allegation, the highest Merit, consists, in a free Acknowledgment of Sin, or a total Renunciation of all Worthiness.

Ther. When We add Confession, and join *Repentance*, to all our other Works. When We lament our Deficiencies, and implore Forgiveness. Surely, this must be available with a merciful GOD, and cannot but entitle Us to the Happiness of Heaven.

Asp. How strange does it sound, at least in my Ears, for poor, miserable, guilty Creatures, to talk of entitling themselves to the Happiness of Heaven,
by

* Job xiii. 7.

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by any Deeds of their own! When it is owing wholly to GOD's rich *forbearing Mercy*, that they have not, long ago, been transmitted to Hell: owing wholly to GOD's free *preventing Grace*, that they are, at any Time, enabled to think a good Thought.

But not to enlarge upon this Consideration.—I would ask, Whether those penitential Exercises were attended with a hearty Detestation of Sin, and an utter Abhorrence of the Sinner?—If they *were*; You would then renounce Yourself universally. You would never think of placing the least Dependence on any Thing of your own; nay, You would even *lothe Yourself in your own Sight* *.—If they *were not*; then your very Repentance falls short, and is to be repented of. It is as if *One came to the Press-fat, to draw out fifty Vessels, and there were but twenty* †. It is, if I may continue the Prophet's Metaphor, *the scant Measure*; which, in this your spiritual Traffic, as well as in the Affairs of secular Commerce, *is abominable* ‡.

Or, should your Repentance be without a Failure, and without a Flaw; I must still say to my Friend, as our LORD replied to the young Ruler; *One Thing thou lackest*. In all these Acts of Humiliation, You have only taken Shame to Yourself. Whereas, a Righteousness is wanting, which may magnify the Law, and make it honourable.—Should GOD, without insisting upon this, pardon and reward, He would not act according to his glorious Character; nor be, at once, *a just GOD, and a SAVIOUR* ||. —And if You can find this Righteousness, *either in the*

* Ezek. xxxvi. 31. † Hag. ii. 16. ‡ Mic. vi. 10.
|| Isai. xlv. 21.

the Depth, or in the Height above; in any Person or any Object, save only in the Obedience and Death of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, I retract whatever I have advanced.

Ther. A Preacher, and an Author, have lately assured Us; That We are to be “accepted of GOD, “and saved by our own Obedience.”—Another has told Us; “That a Christian may secure to Himself “everlasting Happiness by his own Obedience.”—If these Things are true, I need not scruple to repeat my Assertion, and adhere to my Opinion; That our own Duties, especially when accompanied with Repentance, are a *real* and *proper* Foundation for Life eternal.

Asp. If these Things are true, the Apostle Paul was under a great Mistake; when, treating of CHRIST and his Merits, He ventured to assert; *Other Foundation can no Man lay, save that which is laid, even JESUS CHRIST**. And the Apostle Peter (to speak in the softest Terms) forgot what He was about, when He so confidently averred; *There is no other Name under Heaven, given among Men, whereby We must be saved.*—But the real Truth is, such Preachers and such Authors darken, if not extinguish, the Grace of CHRIST. And we are as much obliged to them, for their Service; as if they had attempted to sow up the *Veil*, that was rent in twain; and to shut the *Holy of Holies*, which was opened by our REDEEMER's Death.

Ther. If You will not credit either of our modern Preachers, I can produce a Decision, made by one of the most antient and authoritative Synods; *Then bath GOD also to the Gentiles granted Repentance unto Life.*

* 1 Cor. iii. 11.

Life *.—Repentance unto Life, is *their* unanimous Voice, and *my* unexceptionable Voucher.

Ass. I can easily guess the Assembly, to which You refer. But I can hardly grant it the venerable Name of a *Synod*. It consisted of some *Judaizing Converts*, *They that were of the Circumcision*. Who adhered, with a tenacious and bigotted Zeal, to the *Mosaic Rites*.—However, though I might scruple my *Theron's* Appellation, I readily acquiesce in *their* Determination.

It is not said, Those *Gentiles* were penitent, and therefore GOD granted them Life. This should have been the Language of the Assembly, in order to establish my Friend's Way of Thinking.—On the contrary, they were *dead* in Sin. GOD, of his free Goodness, granted them Repentance. Which is both the Beginning, and a substantial Part of *true* Life: even of that Life, which is founded on Justification, is carried on by Sanctification, and completed in Glory.

I would farther observe; That Repentance is a *Turning of the Heart*. And, when it is Repentance unto Life, it is a Turning of the Heart from every other Object, to the great and sole Fountain of Good, *CHRIST JESUS* †.—Were Men Slaves to Sensuality? When they repent, they are turned to *CHRIST*, for refined Desires and heavenly Affections. Were they wont to confide in themselves, and their own Works? As soon as they truly repent, they turn to *CHRIST* for a better Righteousness; and, thereby, for everlasting Acceptance with GOD.—In short; they turn from every false Confidence, as well as from every evil Way. Ashur

shall

* Acts xi. 18.

† Acts xix. 4.

shall not save us, is their fixed Resolution. They look, not to their own Tears or Humiliation; not to their own Duties or Graces; but they *look for the Mercy of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, unto eternal Life* *.

Ther. Suppose, it should be wrong, to expect such a vast Reward, as the inconceivable Glories of Heaven, on Account of our own Duties: Yet, to set them *wholly* aside; to allow them *no* Influence at all; not so much as the *least* Co-operation, in turning the Scale; this is an Excess on the other Hand. If the former is *Presumption*, the latter is *Fanaticism*.

Asp. When Lord B——n was shewn a famous Quadrangle in *Oxford*, viewing one Side, He cried out with Rapture; “ Surely, I am in *Italy*. All “ is so graceful and delicate !” Viewing the other Side, He acknowledged with Regret; “ I am certainly in *England*. All is so coarse and heavy !” —When I see the New Testament in every one’s Hand, and read the Articles of our public Faith, I am ready to fancy myself in one of the pure *reformed* Churches. But when I hear the Discourse of serious People, and examine their Sentiments, I am forced to confess my Mistake. I cannot but imagine, that I am among the backsliding Churches of *Galatia*.

Ther. Why among the Churches of *Galatia*?

Asp. Because they, like the Generality of modern Christians, considered the Work and Righteousness of *CHRIST*, as too weak or scanty a Bottom, whereon to stand before *GOD*. They suspected it, as a Man would suspect the Proposal, to venture Himself on the Waves of the Ocean, in a Basket of

Rufhes. They could not bear to think, that all their Duties, Services, and Performances of the Law, should be utterly set at nought. Should have no Influence at all, in turning the Scale—But does the Apostle *approve their Saying*? No; He declares, *this their Way was their Folly*.

You are pleased to mention *Fanaticism*. A Word, which I do not thoroughly understand. Neither is it of much Significancy, to enter upon the Disquisition of an obnoxious Term. I would only maintain; That, on Us unworthy Sinners, whatever is bestowed by the righteous GOD; is bestowed, not as a Debt * to our Works, but as the Donation of pure *Grace*. And if this be *Fanaticism*, I plead guilty to the Charge. I glory in my Shame.

Ther. I think, it is sufficiently of Grace; if We acknowledge good Works, to be wrought by the Assistance of the Divine SPIRIT; and then admitted, together with our SAVIOUR's Merits, as a Recommendation to the divine Favour.

Asp. The *Pharisee* could make his Acknowledgements, for the divine Assistance. GOD, *I thank Thee*, was his Language. Yet, this did not exempt Him from the Charge of *Pride*, nor secure Him from the Sin of *Boasting*.—Besides; if good Works are wrought by the Operation of the Divine SPIRIT, they draw a Bill upon our Gratitude, not upon the Bank of Heaven. They render Us the *obliged*, not the *deserving* Party. To think or teach otherwise, is

errant

* *Bestowed as a Debt*, is, I must allow, somewhat like Jargon. But, perhaps, *Jargon* and *Inconsistency*, may not be without their *Propriety* in this Place. As they tend to shew the Genius of *that Doctrine* which would connect such contradictory Ideas.

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errant *Popery* *, however it may lurk under a Veil of *Protestantism*.

You bring to my Mind a memorable Story.—Two Persons were traveling together, in the Desarts of *Arabia*. The one utterly unarmed; the Other wore a Sword, and carried a Musket. As the Place was exceedingly dangerous, the latter, solicitous for the Safety of his Companion, makes Him a Present of his Fire-arms.—Which was no sooner done, than a Lion espies them, and advances fiercely towards them. The foremost discharges his Piece, and wounds their horrid Aggressor. The Wound, neither killing, nor disabling, only enrages the Monster. He seizes the unfortunate Marksman, and is upon the Point to tear Him Limb from Limb. His Fellow-traveler flies to his Succour; snatches up the Carbine, which dropt from the other's Hand; and fells the ravenous Beast to the Ground. Then, drawing his Sword, stabs him to the Heart, and rescues his Friend.

The Lion thus slain, they take off the Skin. Which, He who slew the lordly Savage, claims as his own. “No, says his *grateful* Friend, as You “did Part of the Execution with *my* Weapon, I “insist upon Half of the shaggy Spoil. I expect “Satisfaction likewise for the Loss of my Piece, “which You broke in the Encounter.”—To ob-

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tain

* *Good Works*, says a Champion for the Church of Rome, are *Mercatura Regni cœlestis, the Price We pay, or the Commodity We barter, for the Kingdom of Heaven*.—Another Zealot of the same Communion declares; *Cœlum gratis non accipiam, It shall never be said, that I receive Eternal Life, merely as a Matter of Alms*.—So speaks He! But, blessed be GOD, *We* have not so learned CHRIST.

tain both, He commences a Law-suit against that generous Associate, who not only *gave* Him the Weapon, but *saved* the Prosecutor from the very Jaws of Destruction.

Ther. Truly, if I had been Judge, I should, without any Hesitation, have determined such a Cause. Instead of *Costs* and *Damages* for my Plaintiff, I should have transmitted the disingenuous, shameless Wretch to the Pillory.

Asp. I believe, all the World would applaud your Sentence.—Only be pleased to remember, that the Procedure, on which You so justly animadvert, is the *very Picture* of our excessive Unreasonableness; If We presume to write ourselves Creditors, and the Divine BEING Debtor; because, He has delivered Us from the Bondage of Corruption, and enabled Us to perform the Duties of Godliness *.

Theron paused; as somewhat struck by the Representation. After a short Interval, *Aspasio* resumed the Discourse.

Believe me, my dear Friend, Salvation, both in the Root and all its Branches, is *entirely* of Grace. Or else believe me, for the many cogent Testimonies of Scripture; which most circumstantially ascertain this fundamental Truth.

Ther. Pray, let me ask, What is the exact Meaning of *Grace*?

Asp. The first and principal Meaning, that which I have all along had my Eye upon, in our present Conference, is, The *Favour* and *Kindness* of GOD; infinitely rich, and infinitely free; entirely detached from all Supposition of human Worth, and absolutely

* Εχομεν ἡμεῖς τὰς ἀμοιβὰς, καὶ ἀξιώματα ἀπαλλάττομαι τῆς αἰτίας. Chrysost.

lutely independent on any such Thing, as human Goodness.—This is the great Origin and Basis of our Salvation. Not like a Fringe of Gold, bordering the Garment; not like an Embroidery of Gold, decorating the Robe; but like the Mercy-Seat of the ancient Tabernacle, which was *Gold—pure Gold—all Gold throughout.*

Election is of Grace: *Having predestinated Us unto the Adoption of Children*, not on Account of human Worthiness, but according to the good Pleasure of his Will *.—Equally gratuitous is our effectual Vocation: GOD hath called Us with an holy Calling, not according to our Works, but according to his Purpose and Grace †.—Faith, with all its precious Fruits, is owing to the same Cause: *He helped them much, who believed through Grace ‡.*—From hence springs Justification, together with all its attendant Privileges: *Being justified freely by his Grace §.*—This is the Origin of Regeneration, and every living Principle of Godliness: *Of his own Will begat He Us by the Word of Truth §.*—The Consummation of Bliss

Y 3

flows

* Eph. i. 5. † 2 Tim. i. 9. ‡ Acts xviii. 27.

|| Rom. iii. 24. *Δωρεαν τῇ αἰσῇ χάρις.* One of these Words might have served, to convey the Apostle's Meaning. But, He doubles his Assertion; in order to give Us the fullest Conviction of the Truth, and to impress Us with a Sense of its peculiar Importance: **FREELY, BY HIS GRACE.**—Is it possible to find out a Form of Speech, that should more absolutely exclude all Consideration of our own Works and Obedience? Or that should more emphatically ascribe the Whole of our Justification to free, uninfluenced, sovereign Goodness?—To find an Expression, more forcible for the Purpose, will puzzle Invention itself. But *this* Expression We find used, again and again, by the sacred Writer, *ἡ δωρεα ἐν χάρις*, Rom. v. 15. *τῆς χάριτος καὶ τῆς δωρεας*, Rom. v. 17.

§ Jam. i. 18.

flows from the same all-supplying Source: *The Gift of GOD is eternal Life* *: It is, in every Respect, a Gift; not only without, but contrary to, all Desert of ours.—So that the Foundation is laid in the Riches of Grace: the Superstructure is reared by the Hand of Grace: and when the Top-stone is brought forth, when our Felicity is completed in the Kingdom of Heaven, the everlasting Acclamation will be, *Grace, Grace unto it* †!

This is that glorious Gospel, which human Learning could never have discovered; which carnal Reason cannot understand; which the Envy of the Devil, and the Pride of Man, will always oppose. But which, to the poor convinced Sinner, is the very Perfection of Wisdom. Esteemed, as the Joy of his Heart; embraced, as the Rock of his Hopes.

Ther. What say You to the Opinion, which *Ouranius* so strenuously maintains? That We are justified not by the Merits of *CHRIST* imputed to Us, but by *CHRIST* himself formed in our Hearts. And *Ouranius* is none of your proud or carnal People. His Writings are remarkable for their strict Piety, and his Life is as exemplary as his Principles.

Asp. You know, *Theron*, I have nothing to do with the Persons of Men, but with the Truths of the Gospel. *Ouranius*, though eminently devout, may be mistaken. And, if this is his Way of Thinking, He quite misapprehends the Doctrine of Grace.

What is written in the Oracles of Scripture? *The LORD justifieth the Ungodly* †. What is implied in

* *Rom.* vi. 23. *χαρις*. Which is a more expressive Word than *δωρεα*, and conveys the Idea of *freest* Favour.

† *Zeck.* iv. 7.

‡ *Rom.* iv. 5.

in the Maxim of *Ouranius*? HE justifieth the Holy, the Heavenly, the Christ-like.—*A Man is justified by Faith* *, says the Secretary of Heaven. He is justified by Works, says the Pen of *Ouranius*: only let them be Works of a superior Order; such as are internal, spiritual, and wrought by the Operation of *CHRIST* on the Soul.—According to this Notion, every One is justified by his own Love, his own Purity, his own Zeal. Whereas, an unerring Writer has most solemnly declared, That by *ONE Man's Obedience Many*, many Myriads of Sinners, even all the redeemed World, *shall be made righteous* †.

This Notion, I think, is *Legalism* in its greatest Subtilty, or highest Refinement. It disannuls the *Merit* of *CHRIST*; it vacates all *Imputation*; and makes our Salvation to consist *wholly* in the Work of Sanctification. Against which, if You remember, I entered my Protest, in one of our ‡ first Conferences. And now having ventured to animadvert on the Tenets of Others, it may reasonably be expected, that I should give an Account of my own Faith.—“ I
“ am pardoned; I am accepted before GOD; or
“ in other Words, I am justified; not because
“ *CHRIST* has put his Laws into my Mind, but
“ shed his Blood for my Sins: not because I *myself*
“ am enabled to walk in all godly Conversation, but
“ because the *LORD JESUS* has fulfilled all
“ Righteousness as my *Surety*.”

Ther. I am for neither of the Extremes. The middle Way is most eligible. This is what sound
Y 4 Sense

* Rom. v. 1.
Dialogue II, pag. 63.

† Rom. v. 19.

‡ See

Sense approves, and the sacred System authorizes. *Whoso believeth on me, says our LORD in one Place, shall not perish, but shall have everlasting Life* *. *Blessed, adds HE in another, are they, who do his Commandments; that they may have a Right to the Tree of Life; and may enter in, through the Gates, into the City* †.

Conformably to these Texts of Scripture, I would neither reject our REDEEMER's Merits, nor repudiate good Works. As this shady Tree, and these cooling Breezes, unite their Properties, to render our Situation agreeable; so those two Causes, acting in Conjunction, exalt Us to the Favour of GOD, and constitute Us Heirs of Heaven.—GOD himself has joined them. And I must urge my Remonstrance in our LORD's own Words, *What GOD hath joined together, let not Man put asunder.*

Asp. Would You then make Impotence itself a Co-adjutor with Omnipotence?—Does this humble the Sinner? Does this exalt the SAVIOUR?—No: it is a most injurious Infringement of his mediatorial Dignity. Instead of excluding, it evidently introduces Boasting. In consequence of such a Scheme, it would be said by the Inhabitants of the heavenly World; “Thanks to our blessed REDEEMER for this Happiness! Yet not to Him *only*, but to “our own Righteousness also.”

Can You imagine, that the Obedience of *CHRIST*, is *insufficient* to accomplish our Justification? Must its Efficacy be reinforced by the Accession of our Works?—And what are these Works of ours? That *they* should enhance the Value, the immense Value, of our REDEEMER's!—*Maimed, tarnished, worm-eaten*

* John iii. 15.

† Rev. xxii. 14.

eaten Things. Eaten by the Worms of Self-seeking, Self-admiring, Self-love; Tarnished by a thousand Vanities: Maimed by ten thousand Negligences.— To join *these* in Commission, with our Divine MASTER's Righteousness; would be infinitely more *disgraceful*, than to tack the Beggar's Rag on the Monarch's Robe. Would be altogether as *needleless*, as to dream of augmenting the Sea, by the Drops of our Bucket.

Ther. Worm-eaten! What Reason have You to represent our Acts of Obedience under this fordid and shameful Image?

Ans. I thought, You could hardly brook this disparaging Expression. It is somewhat like *petty Treason* against the Dignity of Man. My Reasons I must beg Leave to postpone, till some other Opportunity offers. Then, if You please, We will give the Cause a full Hearing.

At present, to make amends for this vile Slander, I will suppose your Works to have *no* Defect; nay, to have *all* the Perfection, which You yourself could wish.—Will You *glory*, on this Account?—You are too modest, I am sure, to avow or patronize such a Practice. Yet, if we say or think, concerning any Attainments of our own, “This is the Ground, on which I expect to escape Condemnation, and inherit Life;” We do, in the most *offensive*, though not in the most *explicit* Manner, glory*.

Or,

* *Omnis Causa Justitiæ & Salutis est Materia & Objectum gloriæ.* Unde Apostolus: Nam si Abraham ex Operibus justificatus est, ex *rebus* gloriatur. VITRING. i. e. Whatever is the Cause of Righteousness and Salvation, is a real and proper Foundation for Glorying. Therefore the Apostle acknowledges, *If Abraham were justified by Works, He hath whereof to glory*, Rom. iv. 2.

Or, will You reckon, that these Services, because faultless, are, in any Degree, meritorious? Let us hear our LORD's Decision in the Case. *When ye have done not some only, but all those Things which are commanded You*—And where is the Man, or what is his Name, who, in any Nation or in any Age, has done all that is commanded?

Where shall I find Him? Angels tell me where?

Shall I see Glories beaming from his Brow?

Or trace his Footsteps by the rising Flow'rs?

Yet even in such a Case, if all this were performed, what shall We say? *We are no better than unprofitable Servants: We have done nothing more, than what was our indispensable Duty to do* *. And have, on this Footing, just the same Claim to Honours and Rewards, as the Negro Slave, after the Dispatch of his daily Business, has upon the Estate or the Wealth of an American Planter.

Ther. But what say You to those Passages of Scripture, which I have quoted. You have given them a Hearing, but no Answer. They, I do insist upon it, expressly assert a Co-operation of *CHRIST's* Merit, and of our own Works, in the Business of Salvation. By which Co-operation, the Law and the Gospel are preserved distinct. Each has its proper Office allotted, and to each its proper Honour is assigned.

Asp. I should rather say; By this your Co-operation, the Law and the Gospel are confounded. Each is dishonoured; nay more, each is destroyed. When You mingle a White with a Black Liquid,

what

* Luke xvii. 10.

what is the Result? Is either of the Colours heightened, or either of them preserved?—If my Comparison seems low or inadequate, let me borrow an Illustration from our great Philosopher, *Newton*. He somewhere mentions a fine Red, and a beautiful Azure; which, when mixed, produce no Colour at all. The Transparency and the Glow, which each, in a State of Separation, possessed; are, upon their Coalition, lost. Such would be the Effect of my Friend's unscriptural Connection.

Unscriptural! No, replies *Theron*. It is the very Language of Scripture. It is asserted in the Book of Revelation; *Blessed are they, that do his Commandments*.—True. But wherefore are they blessed?—Because, the Obedience of Faith is attended with a real Blessedness on Earth. *This Man shall be blessed, in his Doing* *: not for, but in † his Performance of religious and moral Duties.—Because, the Obedience of Faith demonstrates our Title, to eternal Blessedness in Heaven. It is, though not the *Purchase*, yet the *Evidence* of our Right to the Tree of Life.

All

* Jam. i. 26.

† ΕΝ ΤΗ ΚΑΤΑΚΤΕΙΝ ΑΥΤΩ. *IN his Doing*. How exact is the Language of Scripture! Perfectly exact, amidst the greatest Simplicity. It has all the Accuracy of Logic, without any of its Subtilty.—See another Instance of the same Distinctness, on the very same Subject, *Psal. xix. 11. IN keeping of them there IS* (not, for keeping the divine Commandments, there shall be) *great Reward*.—Let us study and examine the sacred Language; sift its Expressions, and weigh their Import. So shall We be, as one of its inspired Authors most emphatically speaks, Παιδευμένοι πρὸς ἀρετήν; *Instructed*, not in the Grose only, but with the utmost Precision and Accuracy.

All this I acknowledge. But where, I beseech You, does the Scripture join the Obedience of *CHRIST* and the Obedience of Man, as mutually conducive to the Justification of a Sinner?—The Scripture utterly *disavows* such a Copartnership. It asserts, what our Homily expresses; “Surely, there “ can be no Work of any mortal Man (be He never “ so holy) that shall be coupled in Merit with “ *CHRIST*’s most holy Act*.”—The Scripture steadily and invariably declares; that, in this greatest of Transactions, *CHRIST* is not an Accessary, but the Principal; nay, that He is ALL. *Be it known unto You, Men and Brethren, that through this illustrious and exalted PERSON †, is preached unto You the Forgiveness of Sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all Things.—Through this PERSON; who, without any Partner or Co-adjutor, purged our Sins.—By Him; not by Him, and our Works jointly; but by Him solely. No other Action, no other Agent, concurring in any Degree. This was typified by the High-Priest; when, on the solemn Day of Expiation, He went into*

* Homily on Good-Friday.

† *Acts xiii. 38. Through this Man.*—I think, the Word *Man* flattens the Period, and diminishes the Dignity of the Sentiment. It should rather be left in the native and noble Ambiguity of the Original; *διὰ τούτου, through this Person.* That the Reader’s Imagination may be permitted to work; and have Room to add; This more than mortal, this *divine* Person.

There is the same improper Precision in our Translation, when the Disciples are represented as crying out; *What Manner of Man is this!* The Greek is beautifully indeterminate, *τίς ἐστις, who; What Manner of Person? Is He a Man? Or more than a Man?* The Turn of Thought, seems to be like that fine Compliment in *Virgil*;

III Book — Nec Vox Hominem sonat; O Dea certe!

into the Tabernacle *alone*; and made the figurative Atonement, without any Associate *.—*From all Things*; by HIM they are *wholly*, as well as *solely* justified. Freed from every Charge, whether of Omission or Commission; and rendered, not in part only, but completely acceptable.

To HIM We owe
ALL our Deliverance, and to None but HIM †.

I hope, therefore, You will no longer consider the supremely excellent JESUS, as a *partial* Cause of our Justification.—What would be the Consequence, if the Person, who is walking by yonder River, should fix one Foot on the solid Bank, and place another on the fluid Stream?

Ther. He must unavoidably fall.

Asp. And what says our unerring Instructor, to those double-minded *Galatians*; who could not believe themselves safe and complete, in the Merits of CHRIST alone: but must be seeking some other Foundation, on which to repose a *Share* at least of their Confidence? He says; and they are awful Words; they call for my *Theron's* most serious Regard; *Ye are fallen from Grace †*, from the Truth and Purity of free Justification.

Let me entreat my Friend, to beware of this Error. I think, it is the prevailing Error of our Times; and so much the more *dangerous*, because it is somewhat specious.—To pour Contempt upon the blessed JESUS, with the *Libertines* and *Deists*, would be shocking to a Mind, that retains the least Reverence
for

* Levit. xvi. 17.
† Gal. v. 4.

† MILTON, Book III.

for sacred Things. Entirely to set aside the meritorious Efficacy of his Undertaking, with the *Arians* and *Socinians*, would be afflictive to a Conscience, that is impressed with the least Sense of Sin. Whereas, to erect our Merits on the Foundation of *CHRIST*'s; to be found in *his*, yet not renounce *our own* Righteousness; this is both plausible to our Reason, and pleasing to our Vanity. This seems to honour the Divine SAVIOUR, even while it gratifies human Pride.—But this is an egregious Falshood, and cannot stand. This is an abominable Idol, and must be laid in the Dust. *CHRIST*, like the *real* Mother of the Child, will have the whole, or none *; the whole—*unshared—unrivalled—undiminished* Glory of our Salvation.

Let me once again entreat my dear *Theron*, to beware of this Error. It is the main Pillar in the *Roman* Heresy, and the Master-policy of the *Popish* Machiavilians †. “*CHRIST* hath merited, that “We may merit,” is their grand Maxim, and their grand Delusion. Hence come their Penances and their Pilgrimages: hence the hypocritical Mortifications of Some, and the extravagant Austerities of Others: this enriches their Shrines, and fills their Cloysters. And to those Seminaries of Superstition, let it be banished, let it be confined.—*There* let them raise their Scaffolding, and try to enlarge the Dimension of the Skies. *There* let them kindle their Flambeaus, and attempt to increase the Lustre of the Sun. When they have effected this *easier* Task, then

* 1 Kings iii. 26.

† Man cannot make Himself righteous, neither in Part, nor in the Whole. To affirm this, is the greatest Arrogancy and Presumption, that *Antichrist* could set up against GOD. *Homily on Salvation*, Part II.

then will We *Protestants* follow their Example, and adopt their System. Then will We also think of adding our own Righteousness, by way of Supplement to the Dignity and Efficacy—the transcendent Dignity and infinite Efficacy—of our LORD's.

Ther. If We are justified wholly by our LORD's Righteousness; if nothing *need* be added, if nothing *can* be added to its all-comprehending Fulness; what will become of the generally received Opinion—That *CHRIST* obtained for Us only a *Possibility* of being saved; or put Us into a *Capacity* of acquiring Salvation?

Asp. It will be discountenanced and overthrown; as extremely dishonourable to the REDEEMER, and no less uncomfortable to the Redeemed. When *CHRIST* procured our Pardon, and recovered our Title to Life; it was all his own Doing; all his own Acquisition. *Of the People there was none with Him* *; none of their Works, none of their Endeavours, to co-operate as a subordinate Cause, under any Shape, or in any Degree whatever.

Hear his own Testimony: *I have finished the Work, which Thou gavest me to do* †. Should You want an Explication of these Words, I refer You to the Comment of an Apostle. *He*, that is, *JESUS CHRIST*, *has obtained eternal Redemption for Us* ‡. This was his Work, and it is fully executed. *He has*, HE HAS, obtained eternal Redemption. So that nothing remains for Sinners, but to receive the purchased Blessedness, and to live as becomes the Redeemed of the LORD.

This

* *Isai.* lxiii. 6.
ix. 12.

† *John* xvii. 4.

‡ *Heb.*

This Truth is written, as with a Sun-beam, in the Pages of the Gospel; and sounds as with a Voice of Thunder, in the Songs of Heaven. *Salvation to our GOD*, they cry, *that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the LAMB* *. Those Saints in Glory, ascribe the Whole—the Whole of their Salvation they ascribe, to the Grace of GOD, and to the Blood of the LAMB.

Ther. Have not many of our most learned Divines represented Faith, Obedience, and Repentance, as the Terms of Acceptance? *CHRIST*, according to this Account, procured not the Blessing itself, but only the Grant of easier Conditions, on which it may be enjoyed.

Ass. What says that sublime BEING, who gives the most learned Divines all their Wisdom? *My righteous Servant shall justify many* †. Not pave the Way, or adjust the Preliminaries, but dispatch the very Business; *shall justify*.—What says that infallible Author, from whose Writings all Divines ought to derive their Doctrines? *CHRIST hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified* ‡. He has done all that was necessary for their Pardon, their Peace with GOD, and their everlasting Felicity. Otherwise, He were not a complete SAVIOUR. He would not *save to the uttermost* ||, if, executing some Part only of the grand Undertaking, He left other Parts to be performed by his People.

The Terms of Acceptance, for fallen and rebellious Man, were, A full Satisfaction § to the divine Justice,

* Rev. vii. 10. † Isai. liii. 11. ‡ Heb. x. 14.
 § Heb. vii. 8.
 § A full Satisfaction; for a Proof of this Point, see Dial. III. IV.

Justice, and a complete Conformity * to the divine Law. These, impracticable by Us, were consigned over to *CHRIST*. By Him they were thoroughly accomplished; and by this Accomplishment of them, He merited for us all Blessings. Among others, He merited the Gift of Faith, the Grace of Repentance, and Ability to yield thankful, dutiful, evangelical Obedience. These therefore are but improperly called the Terms, which are really constituent *Parts* of our Salvation.

To sum up all in a Word—The whole Tenour of Revelation shews, that there are but two Methods, whereby any of the human Race can be justified.—Either by a perfect Obedience to the Law, in *their own* Persons; and then the Reward is of Debt †.—Or else, because the *Surety* of a better Covenant has satisfied all Demands in their Stead; and then the Reward is of Grace.—There is no trimming or reconciling Expedient.—You may choose either of the two; but no third is proposed or allowed.

Ther. Was there not a different Method of Salvation, for the *antient* People of GOD?

Asp. None, *Theron*. In the State of primitive Innocency, a *perfect* and *persevering* Observance of the divine Command, was the Condition of Salvation; or rather, of Life and Immortality ‡. When, by
the

* *A complete Conformity*; for the Illustration of this Truth, see *Dial.* VIII, IX.

† *Rom.* iv. 4. *Pactional* Debt; founded on the Obligation of the Covenant, not springing from any Worth in the Obedience.

‡ *Aspasio* makes a Distinction in this Place, between *Salvation* and *Life eternal*. The former is, strictly speaking,
Vol. I. Z ing,

the first grand Apostacy, this Condition became impossible; a *free* Pardon, and *gracious* Acceptance, through the blessed *JESUS*, were substituted in its Stead. Which Oeconomy, like a Fountain of Life, was opened; when *GOD* promised *the Seed of the Woman, to bruise the Serpent's Head* *.—It ran, like a salutary Rivulet, through the *Antediluvian* World—Continued its Progress, and dispensed its Blessings, along the *Patriarchal* Age—Flowed, in broader and more numerous Streams, under the *Mosaic* Dispensation—Is derived down to Us, enlarged by the Coming of *CHRIST*, and completed by the Ministry of his *Apostles*—Will be transmitted, without any farther Improvements, to the latest Posterity. Henceforward increasing and extending, not its Perfection, but its Influence only. Which it will never cease to do, till, as the Fountain is become a River, the River is augmented into an Ocean; and *the Knowledge of the LORD* our Righteousness fill the Earth, as the Waters cover the Abysses of the Sea †.

There was, I confess, a Diversity in the Administration, but no Difference in the Nature, of the Blessing. *JESUS CHRIST*, however variously manifested, was the *same Yesterday*, is the *same to Day*, will be the *same for ever* ‡. As it is the very

same
ing, a Language suited to the Gospel. The latter is precisely proper to the Law. The Covenant of Grace says; Believe, and thou shalt be saved. The Covenant of Works said; He that doeth them, shall live by them. Salvation implies a Deliverance from some Penalty or Misery incurred, and a Reinstatement in some Blessing or Happiness forfeited. Which are evidently peculiar to the evangelical Dispensation, and not applicable to the State of Integrity.

* Gen. iii. 15.

† Isai. xi. 9.

‡ Heb. xiii. 8.

same Sun, which *gleams* at early Dawn; which *shines* in the advancing Day; and *glows* at Height of Noon.

My Simile reminds Us of the Time, and leaves a most important Doctrine upon our Memories. Suppose We take the Admonition, and begin to move homeward.

Ther. We need be in no Hurry, *Aspasio*. My Watch tells me, that We have half an Hour good. Besides, I have something farther to alledge, and from a very great Authority, which seems directly contrary to your Notion.

Asp. Just as You please, *Theron*. If You choose to stay, I am all Compliance with your Inclination. And, would Truth permit, I should be all Conformity to your Opinion.

Ther. You know, who it is that asks; *What doth the LORD require of Thee?* And neither of Us need be informed, What it is, that the Prophet replies; *Do Justice, love Mercy, and walk humbly with thy GOD* *. But I want to know, what You think of this Passage?

Asp. I think, it is absolutely inconsistent with your Scheme. This Passage inculcates *Humility*. But your Scheme is the very Reverse of that amiable Virtue. A Self-justiciary walking humbly with GOD, is little better than a Contradiction in Terms.

The LORD has said; *Ye shall be saved by Grace* †. Your System replies; “No, but by our
“ own

* Mich. vi. 8.

† *Eph.* ii. 5. The Solicitude of the blessed Apostle, to preserve inviolate the Honours of divine Grace, is, in this Place, very conspicuous.—He had told the *Ephe- sians*, that they were, *by Nature, the Children of Wrath*.

“own Sincerity, and our own Works.”—It is declared in Scripture; That *the Gift of GOD is eternal Life*. It is implied in my Friend’s Doctrine; That this Happiness is the Wages of our own Repentance and Reformation.—“My SON shall have all the Glory of a Sinner’s Salvation,” is the unalterable Decree of the MOST HIGH. “*We* will have a Share in the Honour,” is the Language of your Opinion.—Look, how wide therefore the East is from the West! So remote is such a Strain of Teaching, from the Practice of walking humbly with our GOD.

Ther. But consider, good *Aspasio*; have I not the Prophet’s Authority for my Opinion? Are not his Words expressly on my Side? Does He not mention those Duties of Morality and Piety, as the appointed Method of obtaining the divine Favour?

Asp. He mentions, I apprehend, a solicitous Enquiry. To which He gives a satisfactory Answer. Then subjoins a practical Improvement of the Whole.—The Enquiry is expressed in these Words; *Wherewithal shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before*

Worthy of nothing but Indignation and Vengeance.—That all their Privileges and Blessings came, not from any Goodness of their own, but from a GOD *who is rich in Mercy*.—That they were originally *dead in Trespases and Sins*. And what can dead Men do, either to obtain or deserve, heavenly and immortal Happiness?—Sufficient this, One would imagine, to guard against the Encroachments of spiritual Pride, and all Self-glorying whatever. But the zealous Writer, to cut off both the Root and Branch of this abominable Principle, adds in Verse the fifth; *By Grace*, through infinitely free Favour, *ye are saved*. To give the utmost Force to his Blow, He again inculcates the same Truth, in the very same Words; *By Grace*, purely, entirely, exclusive of all Works, *are ye saved*, Ver. 8.

*before the High GOD? Shall I come before Him with Burnt-offerings, with Calves of a Year old? Will the LORD be pleased with Thousands of Rams; with ten Thousands of Rivers of Oil? Shall I give my First-born for my Transgression, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul *? Justification is the Point in View. How shall I obtain Remission of Sin? In what Manner shall my Transgression be expiated? So that I may appear with Acceptance before the righteous GOD?*

To which it is replied; *He hath shewed Thee, O Man, what is good for this important Purpose; namely, the MESSIAH; pointed out by all thy Sacrifices †, and described in the preceding Chapter. Atonement for Sin, and Peace with GOD, are to be made by a better Hand, and in a better Way, than thou proposhest. HE, whose Outgoings have been from of old, from everlasting ‡; HE, who is the Son of the HIGHEST, and yet the Seed of Her that travaileth ||; HE hath undertaken, and will fully execute, this great Office.*

And what doth the LORD thy GOD require of Thee? What Temper, what Conduct, what Expressions of Gratitude, from his People? Who are reconciled through the Blood of CHRIST, and admitted to the Blessings of the New Covenant §.—

They

* Mic. vi. 7, 8.

† The ceremonial Law was to the Jews a real Gospel; which held Blood, Death, and Transgression of Guilt, before their Eyes continually, as the only Way of Salvation. BOSTON'S Fourfold State.

‡ Mic. v. 2. || Mic. v. 3.

§ Thy GOD, is the Phrase. Which denotes an Interest; implies an Appropriation; and is the peculiar Language of the Covenant.—Thy GOD; not made so by

They are to testify their Thankfulness for this unspeakable Gift, by the Alacrity, Uniformity, and Constancy of their Obedience. By the conscientious Discharge of every *moral, social, and religious* Duty. Or, by doing Justice, loving Mercy, and walking humbly with their GOD.

If this be a true Interpretation of the Text, instead of establishing, it overturns your Cause.—But I have another Objection to your Method, perhaps, more weighty than the foregoing.

Ther. Pray, let me hear it.—I am not so enamoured with my Notions, but I can bear to have them censured; nor so attached to my Scheme, but I can relinquish it for a better.

Asp. I would illustrate my Meaning, by a common Experiment in Optics. When Objects are viewed in a *concave Speculum*, or in the Hollow of a polished Spoon, how do they appear?

Ther. Inverted.

Asp. Such is my Friend's System of Religion. He inverts the Order of the Gospel. He turns the beautiful Building upside down; and lays that for the *Foundation*, which should only be Part of the *Superstructure*.—Not so the Apostle *Paul*. He, like a wise Master-builder, places *CHRIST* as the Foundation-stone; and rears his Edifice of practical Godliness, on that all-supporting Basis.—Examine his Epistle to the *Romans*. Which is unquestionably the completest Model of Doctrine, and the noblest Body of Divinity, extant in the World. He

thy humble Walking, but by an Act of *his own* Grace, previous to any Obedience of thine.—According to *Theron's* Principles, the Prophet should rather have said, walk humbly (not *with thy* GOD, but) that He may be thy GOD.

He first discovers the *Depravity* of our Nature, and the Misery of our Condition.—He, then, displays the Method of our *Recovery* by *CHRIST*, and the Blessings freely vouchsafed in his Gospel.—After which, He delineates the Offices of Morality, and enforces them by the most engaging Motives. Motives, drawn from the free unbounded Loving-kindness of GOD our SAVIOUR, and from the rich invaluable Benefits of his Grace *.—*CHRIST* and his Privileges are the Root. From which, Gratitude blooms, as the Flower; Godliness grows, as the Fruit.

The same Order is observed by St. *Peter*, in his very concise, but very accurate Map, of the Way to Heaven. *Elect, according to the Foreknowledge of GOD the FATHER, through Sanctification of the SPIRIT, unto Obedience, and Sprinkling of the Blood of CHRIST* †.—First, the everlasting Love and electing Grace of the FATHER. Who chooses Us, not because of, but *unto Obedience*.—Then, the enlightening Influence, and renewing Agency

Z 4. of

* This, I think, is the best Platform for an *evangelical* Catechism. The *Ruin* of Man, occasioned by Sin—His *Recovery*, effected by *CHRIST*—His *Gratitude*, to be expressed by way of Obedience.—This Plan is carried into Execution by the *Palatinate* Divines. Who have formed upon it, a Summary of catechetical Instruction. Than which, I have met with nothing of the Kind, more clear and satisfactory; more edifying and animating; more exactly consonant to the benign Spirit of the Gospel, or better calculated to transform the Mind into Holiness, and the Life into Happiness.—This Piece the Reader may see, together with a judicious, and very valuable Exposition of it, in the *Latin Works of Henricus Altingius*, 1 Vol. Quarto. Which, I believe, may be bought for a Trifle, yet are more precious than Gold.

† 1 Pet. i. 2.

of the SPIRIT. Who testifies of *CHRIST*, and applies his Death to the Soul; purifying the Heart by Faith.—From whence, as from a Fountain of living Waters, flow true *Sanctification*, and every Act of filial *Obedience*, every Kind of real Holiness.—All which, being partly defective, and partly polluted, must be sprinkled with the Blood of *JESUS*, and made acceptable by his dying Oblation.

Ther. Is this the constant Method, in which the sacred Writers represent the Gospel Salvation? Do they always observe this particular Order, in arranging its Doctrines and its Duties? Or, is it not an insignificant Circumstance, which goes *first*, provided We take in *both*?

Assp. To observe this Order, I am persuaded, is no insignificant Circumstance. It is of great Consequence, both to our Establishment and to our Growth in Grace. Is it a Matter of Indifference to the Archer, whether He send the Point, or the Feather of his Arrow foremost? Can He, in either Case, hit the Mark with equal Ease, and equal Certainty?

I believe, You will find, that the sacred Writers, in all their *evangelical* Discourses, invariably adhere to this Order. Nay; it took place even under the *legal* Dispensation.—When the LORD GOD published his Law from Mount *Sinai*; when He wrote it, with his own Finger, on Tables of Stone; how did He introduce the Precepts? How enforce their Observance?—Let Us attend to the Preamble; which is the Language of Love, and the very Spirit of the Gospel: *I am the LORD thy GOD; who brought Thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the House*
of

of Bondage *. “ I have already delivered Thee,
 “ with a mighty Hand, from the most sordid and
 “ insupportable Slavery. I have promised Thee,
 “ for thy Possession, the delightful Country of
 “ Canaan; a goodly Heritage of the Hosts of Nations †.
 “ Nay, I myself am thy Portion; a GOD in Co-
 “ venant with Thee; engaged, by an inviolable
 “ Contract, and with the Exertion of all my At-
 “ tributes, to do Thee Good. Therefore, keep the
 “ Statutes, the Judgments, and Ordinances, which
 “ I am now going to establish.”—Could there be
 a more winning Inducement, or a more endearing
 Obligation, to Obedience?

I might point out the same Strain, running through
 the Exhortations of *Moses*, and the Songs of *David*;
 the Sermons of the Prophets, and the Writings of
 the Apostles. But this I wave, not through an
 Apprehension of its Difficulty, only from a Fear of
 Prolixity.—However, You will not think me tedious,
 if I produce one more Instance, from the
 great Master of our Schools. For *We Ourselves*
were some time foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving
divers Lusts and Pleasures, living in Malice and Envy,
hateful and hating one another †. Here, He sets be-
 fore Us a dismal, but exact Picture, of our depraved
 and undone Condition.—Then He presents Us with
 a delightful View of our Redemption, both in its
 gracious Cause, and precious Effects. But, after
 that the Kindness and Love of GOD our SAVIOUR
 toward Man appeared; not by Works of Righteousness,
 which *We have done*, but according to his Mercy, He
 saved Us, by the Washing of Regeneration, and Re-
 newing

* Exod. xx. 2.
 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

† Jer. iii. 19.

† Tit. iii.

renewing of the HOLY GHOST; which He hath shed on Us abundantly, through JESUS CHRIST our SAVIOUR; that being justified by his Grace, We should be made Heirs according to the Hope of eternal Life.—Having thus provided for our Happiness; He then promotes our Holiness. This is a faithful Saying, and these Things I will that Thou affirm constantly, that they who have believed in GOD, be careful to maintain good Works: these Things are good and profitable unto Men.

I make no Comment * upon the Passage: because I hope, You will commit it, as a noble Depositum,
to

* Perhaps the Reader will give me Leave, though *Aspasio* has declined the Office, to add a short *expository* Stricture, upon the most distinguished Parts of this very important Paragraph.—I. We have the Cause of our Redemption; *not Works of Righteousness, which We have done, but the Kindness, the Love, the Mercy of GOD our SAVIOUR.* To these, to these alone, every Child of Man must ascribe, both his Fruition of present, and his Expectation of future Blessedness.

II. The Effects; which are—*Justification; being justified, having our Sins forgiven, and our Persons accepted, through the Righteousness of CHRIST imputed. All this, without any the least deserving Quality in Us; solely by his Grace, and most unmerited Goodness.—Sanctification; expressed, by The Washing of Regeneration. That Washing in the REDEEMER's Blood, which cleanses the Soul from Guilt, as the Washing of Water cleanses the Body from Filth. Which reconciles to GOD, gives Peace of Conscience, and thereby lays the Foundation of an universal spiritual Change. The Renewing of the HOLY GHOST; whose Influences, testifying of CHRIST, and applying his Merits, introduce an Improvement into all the Faculties of the Mind; somewhat like that annual Renovation, and general Smile, which the Return of Spring diffuses over the Face of Nature.*

III.

to your Memory. Your own diligent Meditation, accompanied with humble Prayer, will furnish out the best Exposition.—Only I would just remark, that the Apostle, always consistent, always uniform, marshals his Thoughts with his usual Exactness. Good Works are not *disbanded*; nor yet suffered to lead the *Van*; but made to bring up the *Rear* *.—When he mentions these Fruits of the SPIRIT, He mentions them, not slightly, as Matters of small Moment; but earnestly, as Affairs of great Importance. It is his Desire and his Charge, that all Believers should

III. The *End* and *Consummation* of all: that We should be made *Heirs* of the heavenly Kingdom; and live, now in the assured Hope, hereafter in the full Enjoyment, of *eternal Life*.

* The same Order is observed by St. John, Rev. xiv. 13. *Blessed are the Dead, which die in the LORD; for they rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them.* Not go before, to open the everlasting Doors, and give them Admittance into the Mansions of Joy. But they follow them, when admitted. As the Robe, which, on a King's Coronation-day, flows from his Shoulders, cannot but accompany Him, wheresoever He goes.—It may be pertinent, on the Mention of this Illustration, just to hint; That, as it is not the Robe of State, which makes the King; so neither is it the Practice of Holiness, which makes the Christian. An Union with CHRIST, an Interest in his Merits, and the in-dwelling Presence of his SPIRIT; these, and nothing short of these, constitute the true Christian. Yet, as the royal Robe is an Attendant on Majesty, and distinguishes the Monarch; so, practical Godliness is inseparable from Faith, and adorns the Believer.—Agreeably to this Doctrine, Clemens, the apostolic Father, says; Εν εστοις αλατοις παντες ενκοσμηθησαν οι δικαιοι. They were made δικαιοι righteous, by Faith in CHRIST. They were adorned ενκοσμηθησαν, they and their Faith appeared like themselves, by abounding in every good Work. Clem. Epist. I. ad Corinth.

should *be careful* * ; have their Hearts upon the Business ; should use their best Contrivance, and exert their utmost Endeavours—not barely to practise, but to *maintain* † ; to be exemplary, distinguished, and pre-eminent in the Exercise of every Virtue.—Because, this Virtue, and these Works, though not the Ground of a Reconciliation with GOD, are amiable in the Eyes of all, and *honourable* ‡ to the christian Profession. They are also a necessary Ingredient in personal Happiness, and the apparent Means of social *Usefulness* §.

Ther. This View of the evangelical Plan is, I must confess, new to me ; and particularly your Ordonnance of the Epistle to the *Romans*.

Asp. If this be new, perhaps, what I am going to advance, may be strange.—We have been talking about Acceptance with GOD ; and debating, whether our own good Works, are the Cause of this inestimable Blessing. What will You say ; if We can perform *no* good Work, *till* We are interested in *CHRIST*, and accepted by GOD ?

Ther. Say !—That this is razing Foundations.

Asp. It is razing the wrong, the Foundation falsely so called. Which will certainly deceive as Many, as make it their Trust.—And is it not *prudent*, when We are building for Eternity, carefully to examine the Ground ? Is it not *friendly*, to divert a Man from the

* *Προσέχω*. This is somewhat like that emphatical Expression, which so often occurs in the Old Testament, *נִשְׁמַרְתֶּם* *Ye shall observe to do: Ye shall be very diligent to fulfil ; Ye shall be very exact in performing.*

† *Προσέχω*. If the Reader pleases, He may see this Word more *critically* explained, pag. 227. in the Note.

‡ *Καλὰ*.

§ *Σωφροσύνη*.

the treacherous Sand, and lead Him to the unshaken Rock?—For this Cause I said it once, and for this Cause I say it again; That We can perform *no* good Work, *till* We are interested in *CHRIST*, and accepted of *GOD*.

Ther. Produce your Reasons *Aspasio*. And strong Reasons they must be, which are forcible enough to support such an Opinion.

Asp. The Case seems to speak for itself. How can a Man that is evil, do Works that are good? Would You expect to *gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thistles?* And is not this the Character of every Child of *Adam*, till He is engrafted into the true Olive-tree?—But let Us hear, what our *unerring* TEACHER says: *As the Branch cannot bear Fruit of itself, except it abide in the Vine; no more can Ye,* perform true Obedience, or be endued with true Sincerity, *except Ye abide in me* *. Nothing can be more express and full to our Purpose. But that which follows, is far more alarming and awful to our Consciences. *If a Man abide not in Me, He is cast forth as a Branch, and is withered; and Men gather them, and cast them into the Fire, and they are burned* †.—From which it appears, that the human Heart is never actuated by *good Tempers*; that the human Life can never be productive of *good Works*; until a Man is united to *CHRIST*. No more than a Branch can bear valuable Fruit, while it continues in a State of Separation from the Tree ‡.—

It

* John xv. 4.

† John xv. 6.

‡ This discovers an Error, which is often committed, in our Attempts to instruct little Children. What is more common, than to tell them? “If they will be good, *GOD* Almighty will love and bless them.”—Whereas, they should rather be informed, “That they are Sin-

ners:

350 DIALOGUE VII.

It appears also, that Persons alienated from *CHRIST*, are, and all their Performances too, like *broken, withered, rotten Boughs*: fit for nothing, but to be committed to the Flames, and consumed from the Earth. Both they and their Actions, far from being meritorious, are, in the Estimate of Heaven, worthless and despicably mean.

Ther. What! Are all the noble Actions, performed by the Advocates for Morality, and Lovers of Virtue, worthless in themselves, and despicable before the Supreme BEING? Worthless and despicable (grating Words!) *only* because they are not attended with the Peculiarities of your Faith? Can the Want of this *little* Circumstance, change their Nature, and turn their Gold into Dross?

Ass. My dear *Theron*, call not the Circumstance little. It is sufficient, were your Works more splendid than Gold, to debase them into Tin, into Lead, into Dross.—When the poor Shepherd brought You, yesterday Morning, a Present of some Wood-strawberries; bringing them, as an humble Expression of his *Gratitude*, they were kindly received. But, if He had offered them, as a *Price* for your House, or as the *Purchase* of your Estate; how should You have regarded them, in such a Connection? No Words can express the Disdain, You would have conceived.—When *Barnabas* presented a Sum of Money to the Apostles, for the Supply of their Necessities, and the Relief of indigent Believers *; it was welcome to
and

“ners: but, that GOD Almighty has given his SON
“to die for Sinners: and, if they pray to Him, He will
“forgive their Sins; will make them holy; make them
“happy; and bless them with all spiritual Blessings in
“*CHRIST*.”

the Saints, and pleasing to their GOD. But, when *Simon* the Sorcerer, offered his Gold to *Peter* and *John*; offering it, not from a Principle of Faith, but as an Equivalent for the HOLY SPIRIT; not in order to testify his Thankfulness, but rather to play the Huckster with Heaven; it was rejected with the utmost Indignation *.

I

* *Acts* viii. 20. We have much Talk about *Simony* and *Simoniacal* Practices. The Case, I think, is misunderstood, and the Expression misapplied.

The more refined Species of *Simony*, is, the Attempt mentioned by *Aspasio*. An Expectation and Endeavour to procure Union with *CHRIST*, the Communication of the SPIRIT, and all heavenly Blessings, by any Works or any Righteousness of our own. Which, considered in this View, are called by the Prophets, *Money and Price*.

The grosser Kind of *Simony*, seems to be practised by a certain Court, styled *Spiritual*, or *Ecclesiastical*. Which thunders out Excommunications and Curses; debars poor Creatures from religious Privileges; and causes them to be "buried with the Burial of an Ass;" unless they pacify their pious Indignation, by a little filthy Lucre.—This is the Language of that same spiritual Judicature. "If Thou wilt lug out a few Crowns or Guineas from thy Purse, all shall be well. Heaven shall smile, and the Church opens her Arms. Whereas, if Thou art refractory in this Particular; and unwilling, or unable, to comply with our pecuniary Demands; Thou art cut off from the Means of Grace. Thou shalt no longer hear that Word of the Gospel, by which the Spirit of Faith cometh. Nor any more be Partaker of that Sacramental Ordinance, which is a Sign and Seal of spiritual Benefits."—Is not this a most infamous Traffic, whereby sacred Things are bought and sold? In the present State of Affairs, what can be a nearer Approach to the Sin of the mercenary Magician? What can be a more indelible Blot on the Purity and Discipline of any Church?

Pudet hæc Opprobria Nobis

Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.

I leave my Friend to apply the preceding Instances. Only let me beg of Him to believe; that, if my Words are *grating*, they are extorted by the Force of Truth. If I am obliged to blame, what He calls good Works; it is, as a great Critic blames Eloquence, “with the “Tenderness of a Lover.”—But my Censure falls only on their faulty *Origin*, and unbecoming *Aim*. Let them spring from the Grace of *CHRIST*, as their Source; let them propose the Glory of *CHRIST*, as their End; then, instead of putting a Slight upon them, or giving them a Bill of Divorce, I would court, caress, and wed them.—Whereas, if neither *this* End be kept in the View, nor that Principle operate in the Heart; I must persist, in questioning the Genuineness of their Character; nay, in denying the very Possibility of their Existence. There may be a *Mimickry* of holy Actions. But it is *Mimickry* only; empty, as the Combs * made by those Wasps; and unreal, as the Flame that is painted.

I have an Authority for this Doctrine, which I think, You will not offer to controvert.

Ther. What Authority?

Assp. That of our Church. Who declares, in her XIIIth Article; “Works done before the Grace “of *CHRIST*, and Inspiration of his *SPIRIT*, “are not pleasing to *GOD*; forasmuch as they “spring not out of Faith in *CHRIST*.”—Faith in *JESUS CHRIST*, purifies the Heart. Till this be done, the Heart is polluted; the Mind and Conscience are defiled †; nothing, that We have or do, is pure.—It is written; *The LORD had Respect*

* *Faciunt & Vespa Favos.*

† Tit. i. 15.

Respect unto Abel, and to his Offering *. First, unto *Abel*; then, unto his Offering. The Man must be restored to Favour, before his Duties can be received with Complacency.

Such a One, You say, is honest in his Dealings, temperate in his Enjoyments, charitable to the Poor. Be it so. Yet, unless these shewy Deeds are referred to the *Glory* of the Supreme JEHOVAH; unless they flow from *Faith* in the crucified JESUS; they are but the Carcass of Virtue †. They may be

Acts

* Gen. iv. 4.

† This great evangelical Truth, will, probably, be reckoned a *hard Saying*, by the carnal Mind; and may seem a *foolish Notion*, to vain Philosophy. I beg Leave therefore, for its better Reception and firmer Establishment, to produce some of the greatest Testimonies in the World.—Let Us hear, what the pious Bishop of *St. Asaph* says, upon the Subject; what the famous Archbishop of *Constantinople* said, long before Him; and what a whole Synod, or a whole Nation of Ecclesiastics, are continually saying, in the Homilies of the *Church of England*.

“ I can do no good Works at all, before I be first
“ justified. My Works cannot be accepted as good, till
“ my Person be so. Nor can my Person be accepted by
“ GOD, till first engrafted into *CHRIST*; before
“ which engrafting into the true Vine, 'tis impossible I
“ should bring forth good Fruit.” *Beveridge's Private Thoughts*, Artic. 8.

Εὐρησὶς γὰρ πολλὰς καὶ εὖ τοις τῆς ἀληθείας ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον διαλαμπύρας· εὐρησὶς ἀνδρᾶς Συμπάσις, ἐλεημοσίας, δικαιοσύνην, προσεχολίας· ἀλλ' ὅταν ἐστὶν ἐξω πίστεως ἀσάθου. Ἐοικασὶν οἱ ἔργοις κομμίς ἀσάθου, καὶ τὸν Θεὸν τῆς εὐσεβείας ἀνησυχίας, ληψάνοις, ἡμεῖς, κατὰ μὲν ἐνδεδυμένοι, αἰσθῶσιν δὲ τῶν καλῶν ἐκ ἑαυτοῦ. *Chrysost. Tom. vi.*

“ Faith giveth Life to the Soul; and they be as much
“ dead to GOD that lack Faith, as they be to the
“ World, whose Bodies lack Souls. Without Faith, all
“ that is done of Us, is but dead before GOD, although

Acts of worldly Policy, of selfish Prudence, or *Pharisaical* Pride. They are no religious Service, nor any pleasing Oblation to the LORD Almighty *. —Nay; instead of being Acts of Obedience, and Objects of Approbation, they stand condemned in the Scripture, and are Breaches of the Commandment. They stand condemned in that Scripture, which declares; *Without Faith it is impossible to please GOD* †. They are Breaches of that Commandment, which requires; *Whether Ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever Ye do, do all to the Glory of GOD* ‡.

Ther. Who can believe this, that considers the intrinsic Excellency of Virtue and virtuous Actions?

Asp. Who can disbelieve it, that considers the preceding Declarations of Scripture? And observes, how GOD has confirmed by his Providence, what He has declared in his Word. Behold *Israel after the*

“ the Work seem never so gay and glorious before Man.”
Homily on Faith.

* Might not this Observation be made, with great Propriety, in our *infirmaries* and other *charitable* Sermons? Should not the Audience be exhorted to abound in Acts of Benevolence, from a *grateful* Regard to the infinitely merciful and condescending JESUS? 2 Cor. viii. 9.—Should they not, before all Things, be directed to *make sure* their Interest in the REDEEMER's Merits? That their Persons may find Favour, and their Alms Acceptance, Eph. i. 6.—Should they not be admonished, that, without this *believing* Application to CHRIST, whatever they do, whatever they give, is worthless in the Eye of their MAKER, and will be fruitless to their own Souls? Heb. xi. 6.—In this Respect our SAVIOUR was eminently typified by the *Jewish* Altar. On which every Sacrifice, by whomsoever brought, was to be offered. And separate from which no Sacrifice, however costly, could be accepted, Exod. xx. 24. Levit. xvii. 3, 4.

† Heb. xi. 6.

‡ 1 Cor. x. 31.

the Flesh. They had, what You will reckon greater than Sincerity, *a Zeal for GOD* *. Yet, *not being according to Knowledge*, the Knowledge of Justification by the Righteousness of *CHRIST*; it was as if they offered Swine's Flesh, or cut off a Dog's Neck; affronting and offensive to the HOLY ONE.—Nay; they *served GOD intensely* † and assiduously; served Him, the Apostle affirms, *Night and Day*. Yet, not serving Him as Sinners, redeemed by *CHRIST*; but rather as Righteous Persons, who would be their own Redeemers; all their Toil was unacceptable and unprofitable. With all this Parade of Services, they were rejected by JEHOVAH, and cast out from his Presence, “like an abominable Branch.”

Upon the Whole: Shall We submit to the Determination of our established Church? Shall We acquiesce in the Decision of our Divine MASTER? Then We must acknowledge; That there is no such Thing as a good Work, till We are reconciled to GOD; till our Persons are accepted through *CHRIST*.—Therefore, to represent our own Works, as the Means of Reconciliation and Acceptance, is both chimerical and absurd. *Chimerical*, because it builds upon a Phantom; and takes for a Reality, what has no Existence. *Aburd*, because it inverts the natural Order of Things; and would make the Effect, antecedent to the Cause. I might add, *idolatrous* also; because it pays to the Performances of a Creature, what is reserved wholly for the Righteousness of our incarnate GOD.

A a 2

Ther.

* Rom. x. 2.

† Acts xxvi. 7. *Et exultavit.*

Ther. Before We quit this agreeable Retreat, let me ask my *Aspasio*; What He proposes, by running down all those Works, which are the Produce of inward Religion, and essential to true Holiness? Whose Excellency is displayed in the *clearest*, and whose Necessity is urged in the *strongest* Terms, throughout the whole Bible.

Asp. I am far from running down such Works, as are the Produce of inward Religion; and therefore may be justly styled, *Works of Faith, and Labours of Love* *.—But I would caution my *Theron*, and I would myself take care, that our Works be accompanied with those Circumstances, which alone can render them *truly* good. Let them arise from *Faith*, and bear witness to *Love*, or else We shall have *Thistles instead of Wheat, and Cockle instead of Barley* †.

Perform them, in Obedience to a reconciled GOD, and out of Gratitude to a reconciling SAVIOUR, then they are genuine, they are valuable. Attempt them, in order to be accepted by your MAKER, and obtain eternal Life, then they are spurious, they are pernicious. In the former

* *Works of Faith, and Labours of Love*, 1 Theff. i. 3. How finely are good Works characterized, in this Place! Though it be only *en passant*, transiently, or by the by. And how judiciously are the *true* distinguished from the *counterfeit*! Works, which are done in Faith; Works, which proceed from Love; these, and these only, the Apostle signifies, are *really* good.—As a spacious River, though pressing forward to the Ocean, nourishes many a fair Plant; and suckles many a sweet Flower, by the Way. So the sacred Writers, though principally intent (as here) upon some different Point; yet drop *incidentally* such valuable Truths, as cheer the Believer's Heart, and make glad the City of our GOD.

† Job xxxi. 40.

mer Cafe, they are like a Candle fet on a Candlestick; in the latter, they are like a Torch placed in the Thatch.

Ther. In what Respects can they be pernicious?

Asp. I will mention two.—We shall never be like the Church, *who comes up from the Wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved* *; so long as We bolster up Ourselves, with a Conceit of personal Righteousness. This was the Error, the fatal Error of the *Pharisees*. This the Film, which blinded the Eyes of their Mind; and sealed them up, under the Darkness of final Unbelief.

Besides, my dear *Theron*: If You expect to be saved by your own Duties, You will be loth to see the worst of your Condition. To see the worst of your Condition, will be a Dagger to your Hopes, and as Death to your Soul. You will therefore be inclined to *daub with untempered Mortar* †. Instead of acknowledging the deep Depravity of your Nature, and the numberless Iniquities of your Life, You will invent a thousand Excuses, to palliate your Guilt. And, by this Means, erect a *Wall of Partition*, between your Soul and the Merits of your REDEEMER. Which will be a greater Inconvenience, a more destructive Evil, than to cut off all Supply of Provision from an Army encamped, or even to intercept the Sun-beams from visiting the Earth.

Ther. Now you talk of Armies, I must observe; That, though I have scarce been able to keep my Ground, in this argumentative Action, I cannot allow You the Honour of a Victory. As a *Retreat* is very different from a *Rout*.

A a 3

Asp.

* Cant. viii. 5.

† Ezek. xiii. 10.

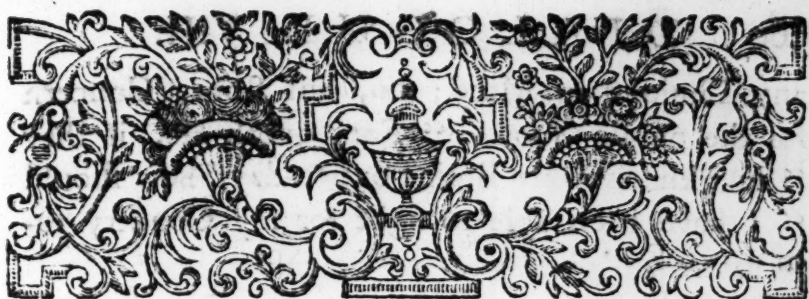
Asp. I would also remark, that my Friend has changed the intended Plan of our Operations. Has almost continually acted upon the *Offensive*. While my Part has been only to sustain the Shock. At our next Encounter, You may expect to have the Order of Battle reversed. I shall direct my Forces to begin the Charge. Put Yourself therefore in Readiness for a *brisk Attack*.

Ther. You act the fair Enemy, *Aspasio*, I must confess; in thus giving the Alarm, before You make the Assault.

Asp. This Hostility may appear *fairer still*, when I assure You, that my Weapons aim not at the Destruction of your Comfort, or the Demolition of any valuable Interest. Only they would be *mighty, through GOD, to pull down the Strong-holds of Unbelief; and bring every self-exalting, every rebellious Thought, captive unto CHRIST**. Captive, in a professed Submission to his Righteousness, as well as a dutiful Subjection to his Commands.—And, when *such* is the Tendency of the Campaign, it will be your greatest Advantage, to lose the Victory †. It will be better than a Triumph, to acknowledge Yourself vanquished.

* 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.
 ἡττα δι' ὠφελειαν.

† Εστιν οὗτε νικη μὲν φερεῖ βλαβὴν,



DIALOGUE VIII.

THERON.



OUR last Conversation ended with a *Challenge*. To decline or delay the Acceptance of it, would look like Cowardice in me, and be a Piece of Injustice to You, *Aspasio*. Therefore, I am now ready to give You all the Satisfaction, which a Gentleman can demand.—Only as the Weather continues hazy, I believe, my *Study* must be the Place of Action.

Asp. A Challenge! *Theron*—

Ther. What, Sir! Do You boggle? Would You eat your Words, and play the Poltroon?

Asp. Perhaps, I may have an Inclination to follow the Example of a *Brother Hero*; who ran away from the Field of Battle, just as his Comrades were advancing to charge the Enemy. And when called to an Account for his Behaviour, right worthily acknowledged; That his Retreat * proceeded, not from
any

* *Retreat*—*Bengelius* thinks, there is such an Air of Self-adulation, and vain Pretence, in the Word used by
A a 4 the

any Timidity of Mind; no, but from a Concern for the public Good. “ For, quoth He, if they
 “ had knocked my Brains out to-day, how should
 “ I have been able to fight for my Country to-
 “ morrow ?”

You smile, *Theron*, at my doughty Warrior, and his sage Maxim.—But, since You have glanced at a certain *modish* Custom, give me Leave very seriously to assure You; That, if the Affair was to be determined by Sword and Pistol, I should reckon such a Conduct, a resolute Refusal at least, not at all unmanly, but the *truly* wise and gallant Behaviour. For surely, it can never be an Instance of Wisdom, to hazard my Life, at the mere Caprice of a turbulent Ruffian; who is a Stranger to all the Principles of Humanity and Generosity, but a Slave, an abandoned Slave, to his own ungovernable Passions.—Surely, it can never be an Act of real Bravery, to expose *my* Person; because some fool-hardy Practitioner in the Fencing-school, is desperate enough to risk *his*.—The Gentleman, the true Gentleman, should exert a becoming Dignity of Spirit; and scorn to set his Welfare on a Level, with that of an inconsiderate and barbarous Bully *.

Ther.

the unclean Spirit, *Matt. xii. 44. Εξελθον, exi vi. Sic loquitur, quasi non eiectum. Vide Superbiam!* He says not, I was *cast out*, but I *came out*. He could not brook the former Expression. His Pride was too great to confess the Truth, or to “ declare the Thing as it is.”

* *Aspasio* calls the Person who gives the Challenge, a Bully. And such, notwithstanding all the Maxims of fantastical and false Honour, He will certainly be found, when tried at the Bar of Reason or Justice. For, if the most impetuous, irrational, and brutal Barbarity is allowed to constitute a Bully, *He* has an indisputable Title

to

Ther. But Honour, my *Aspasio*, Honour is at stake. Better to lose our Life, than forfeit our Reputation. Better to be in a Grave, than to be the Jest of every Coffee-house; and perhaps pointed at, as We pass the Streets, for mean-spirited, sneaking, or, as the Gentlemen of the Sword so *elegantly* speak, white-livered Animals.

Asp. Forfeit our Reputation! Amongst whom, I beseech You?—A few rash and precipitate Creatures: The Pupils of *La Mancha's* Knight: The Sons of *Chimera* * and Cruelty. Who, by associating the Notion of Cowardice, with the Practice of forgiving Injuries; have attempted to bring into Disrepute, the *most generous* Act of the human Mind. Whose Principles are, I say not, a Departure from the Precepts of Religion, but a Disgrace to Reason, and the Reproach of common Sense. Whose Applause, therefore, is Infamy; and their Detraction the highest Praise they can bestow.

From every judicious and worthy Person, your Conduct will be sure to gain Approbation, and your Character Esteem. When *Cæsar* received a Challenge from *Anthony*, to engage Him in single Combat, He very calmly answered the Bearer of the Message; *If Anthony is weary of Life, tell Him, there are other Ways to Death, besides the Point of my Sword.*

to the Character; who, on account of a mere Punctilio, or some slight Affront, would destroy a Life, which might be of Service to *Society*—might be a Blessing to various *Relatives*—and is intimately connected with a blissful or miserable *Immortality*.

* This Kind of Gentry are styled—in a Book, with which they have little or no Acquaintance; but whose Maxims will be had in Reverence, when their Names are lost in Oblivion — בני שאון *The Sons of Bluster*, or *The Children of Noise*, Jer. xlvi. 45.

Sword.—Who ever deemed this, a mean-spirited or sneaking Behaviour? All Ages have admired it, as the Resolution of a *discreet* and *gallant* Man; who was sensible of his own Importance, and knew how to treat the petulant and revengeful Humour of a discontented Adversary with its deserved Contempt.

Barely to lose our Life, is the smallest of those Evils, which attend this mischievous Practice.—It is pregnant with a long, an almost endless Train of disastrous Consequences to Parents, Wives, Children, Friends, Associates, and the Community.—It is an infallible Expedient, to be deprived of the Favour of the infinite GOD, and to be excluded from the Joys of his eternal Kingdom.—It is the ready Way, to become an Object of Abhorrence to the Angels of Light; and be made the Laughing-stock of Devils, in their Dungeons of Darknefs *. *Shame*, everlasting Shame, *shall be* the Reward of such Gallantry, *the Promotion of* such Fools †.

Ther.

* “ Let me tell You with Confidence,” (says an excellent Person, addressing Himself to one of these unhappy *Desperados*) “ that all Duels, or single Combats, “ are murderous; blanch them over (how You list) with “ Names of Honour, and honest Pretences, their Use is “ sinful, and their Nature devilish.” See the select Works of Bishop Hall, in one Volume, Fol. pag. 526. Where the Reader will find a happy Mixture of true *Oratory*, and sound *Divinity*; a rich Vein of *Fancy*, and a sweet Spirit of *Piety*; Contemplations upon the Histories of Scripture (which, I think, are our Prelate’s Master-piece) almost as *entertaining* and *instructive*, as the Subjects illustrated are important and wonderful.—Notwithstanding a few stiff or antique Phrases, I cannot but esteem the Works of this Author, among the most valuable Compositions extant in our Language.

† Prov. iii. 35.

Ther. With regard to this Point, I am entirely of your Opinion, *Aspasio*; however I may differ in other Particulars.

Asp. Say You so, *Theron*! Would You then tamely submit to Affronts, Insults, and Assaults?

Ther. As to the trifling Affronts of a peevish incontinent Tongue, I would treat them with a superior Scorn. When thus treated, they are sure to recoil, with the keenest Edge, and severest Weight, upon the impotent Malice which offers them. The Wretch should see, that I could pity his Misery, and smile at his Folly.—But with regard to Assaults, especially those of a capital Nature, the Case is otherwise. Should any one offer Violence to my Person, it is at his Peril. He would find, and perhaps to his Smart,

*Et Nos Tela Manu, Ferrumque haud debile Dextrâ
Spargimus, & nostro sequitur de Vulnere Sanguis *.*

Here, the fundamental and everlasting Law of *Self-preservation* calls upon Us to play the Man. And I am sure, *Christianity* does not require Us, to yield our Throats to the Knife, or open our Breasts to the Dagger.

But to retire—to deliberate—to sit down—and indite a *formal* Challenge—seems to me altogether as savage and iniquitous, as to assault on the Highway.—He that demands my Money on the Road, or extorts it by an incendiary Letter, or decoys me into the Snare by a forged and counterfeit Note; is stigmatized for a Villain; is abhorred by every Person of Integrity; and, when detected, is rewarded with a Halter. Why should We reckon the Head-strong

Brave

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Bravo *lefs injurious*? Who makes his Attempt upon my very Life; and thirsts, with insatiable Fury, for my Blood?

Ass. He allows You a fair *Chance*; it is said.

Ther. A Chance! Of what?—Either of falling a Sacrifice to his Rage, or of imbruing my Hands in his Blood. Which is neither more nor less, than reducing me to a Necessity, of launching into Damnation myself, or of transmitting a Fellow-creature to eternal Vengeance.—And is *this* an Extenuation? *This* a mitigating Circumstance? It really proves the Practice so inexcusably wicked, that nothing can be pleaded in its Defence. The very Argument, used to justify the horrid Deed, inflames its Guilt and aggravates its Malignity.

'Tis Pity, but the legislative Authority would interpose, for the Suppression of such a flagrant Wrong to Society, and such a notorious Violation of our benign Religion. Why should not the Laws declare it *Felony*, to make the first Overture for a Duel? Since it is always more heinous, and frequently more pernicious. Is always Murder in the Intention, and frequently issues in *double Destruction*: the One, inflicted by the Stab of Violence; the Other, executed by the Sword of Justice.

Might it not, at least be branded with some Mark of public Infamy, or subjected to a severe *pecuniary Mule*? So that a Gentleman of Spirit and Temper might have it in his Power to return the Compliment of a challenging Letter with some such Answer;

S I R,

“ However meanly You may think of *Your* Life,
“ I set too high a Value upon *mine*, to expose it as

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“ a Mark for undisciplined and outrageous Passions.
 “ —Neither have I so totally renounced all that is
 “ humane, benevolent, or amiable, as to draw my
 “ Sword for your Destruction, because You have
 “ FIRST been overcome by precipitate and unrea-
 “ sonable Resentment.—You have given me an
 “ Opportunity of acting the Gentleman and the
 “ Christian. And this Challenge I accept, as a
 “ Note under your Hand for five hundred Pounds*;
 “ which will very soon be demanded, according to
 “ Law, by

S I R,

Your, &c.”

Asp. But to resume the proper Subject—the Na-
 ture of *our* Engagement. Which I now recollect,
 and which was explained, when I ventured to give,
 what You call the Challenge.—As it is not my *The-*
ron, but the Obstacles of his Faith, and the Ene-
 mies of his Felicity, which I am to encounter; per-
 haps, I shall have Courage to stand my Ground.

And,

* Might not the Refuser of a Challenge be dignified
 with some honorary Distinction, resembling the *Civic*
Crown among the antient *Romans*? Since, by his cool
 and temperate Bravery, He saves one Life from the
 Sword, another from the Halter.—Was some honorary
 Distinction on the one hand, united to a pecuniary For-
 feiture on the other, I cannot but think, they would
 prove an effectual Method to *check* the *Progress* of this de-
 structive Evil. It would break the Teeth of Malice with
 her own Weapons, and turn the Artillery of Revenge
 upon Herself. Those detestable Passions would be loth
 to indulge themselves in this horrid Manner, if it was
 made the sure Way to *ennoble* and *enrich* the Object of
 their Rage.—*N. B.* The *Civic Crown* was an Ornament
 assigned to those Soldiers, who had in Battle rescued a
 Fellow-citizen from impending Death.

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And, instead of *violating* all the Obligations of Equity, Honesty, and Conscience, I shall certainly evidence my Love to my Friend; nay possibly promote his truest Good.

Ther. I don't see, how this can be effected, by your late Attempt. You attempted to *run down* all Works of Righteousness, as absolutely unable to find Acceptance with GOD, and equally insufficient to recommend Us to his Favour.—It is for the Credit of these, which *Aspasio* has depreciated, that I enter the Lists.

Asp. I attempted to prove, That no human Works should pretend to the Honour of justifying Us, either in Whole, or in Part. Because—this would be an Usurpation of the REDEEMER's Office—this would overthrow the Gospel-method of Justification, which is by *imputing Righteousness without Works* *—this, instead of excluding, would introduce Boasting. And oppose, if not defeat, the grand Design of JEHOVAH, in the Salvation of Sinners; which is, to display the infinite Riches of his Grace.

When any Works are attended with *such* Circumstances, I cannot but wonder, to hear them called Works of Righteousness. I am at a Loss to conceive, how they can themselves be acceptable; much more, how they can recommend a Transgressor to the Favour of GOD.—Nay, I hear our divine MASTER positively and peremptorily declaring, that they are, not good, but evil. *The World hateth me, because I testify of it, that the Works thereof are evil* †.

Ther.

* Rom. iv. 6.

† John vii. 7.

Ther. The World—that is, the Gentile World, or the wicked World; which was abandoned to Licentiousness and gross Immorality. Making no Scruple to indulge Lust or Revenge; committing Adultery or Injustice, or whatever gratified a vicious Inclination.

Asp. And can You think, that the SON of the most high GOD, should be sent from the Heaven of Heavens, only to tell People that Revenge and Adultery are evil? Or does the World hate a Person, for inveighing against Licentiousness and gross Immorality? No, *Theron*: the Works, against which our LORD testified; the Works, which He censured as evil; were the *very best* Deeds both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*. Those, for which they approved and valued themselves; in which they gloried, and on which they trusted. This Testimony, bearing so hard upon all human Excellency, affronted their Pride, and inflamed their Resentment; as it seems to have enkindled a little Warmth in my Friend's Temper.

However, as You apprehend some Injury done to the Credit of human Works, let Us, as We lately promised, give the Matter a fair Hearing.—What is the Standard, to which these Works of Righteousness must be conformed; and by which their Sufficiency may be determined?

Ther. The *moral Law*, doubtless; I know no other Standard of Righteousness, nor any other Way of becoming righteous.

Asp. You will, I hope, ere long, be acquainted with another Way. You will know, what that meaneth, which is spoken by the Apostle; *With the Heart Man BELIEVETH UNTO RIGHTEOUS-*

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NESS *.—At present, I agree to your Proposal. We will join issue on this Footing; and try the Merits of our Cause, before *the Tribunal* of the Law. Yourself shall be the Judge. I will only ask your Opinion, and refer myself to your Decision.—You see, I am soon weary of the military Style. I had obtruded myself on a Part, which I was not qualified to act; and now resume a more becoming Character.

Ther. If You place me on the Bench, I shall allow of no such Digressions; but shall keep You close to the Subject.

Asp. Has your Lordship then considered the Nature of the divine Law, and the Extent of its Obligations?

Ther. It obliges *all* Persons, and comprizes the *Whole* Duty of Mankind. It forbids all Immorality, and enjoins every Virtue.—Are not these your Sentiments?

Asp. They are, when somewhat enlarged.—The Empire of the Law, as *prohibitory* of Evil, extends both to the outward and inward Man. It takes cognizance of the Actions. It judges every Word. All the Operations, and all the Dispositions of the Soul, come under its sacred Jurisdiction.—It is indeed a Discerner, not only of the working Thoughts, but also of the dawning Intentions; and arraigns them both at its awful Bar. *It pierces even to the dividing asunder of the Soul and Spirit* †. Not the inmost recesses of the Breast, are too deep for its Penetration; nor all the Artifices of the deceitful Heart, too subtle for its Detection.—Other Laws forbid the unclean Act; *this* condemns the wanton Eye, and irregular Desire.

* Rom. x. 10.

† Heb. iv. 12.

Desire. Other Laws punish the injurious Deed ; *this* passes Sentence on the unguarded Sallies of Passion, and the most secret Emotions of Resentment. So eminently true is that Remark of the *Psalmist*, *Thy Commandments are exceeding broad* * !—Tell me now, *Theron*, has your Obedience been commensurate with this extensive Platform of Duty ?

Ther. If the Law be so *very extensive*—

Asp. Nay, my Friend, You cannot suspect, that I have stretched, to an undue Extent, the Obligations of the divine Law. Since this Interpretation is established by an Authority, *too great* to be controverted ; *too clear* to be misunderstood ; even by the Authority of *CHRIST* Himself. Whose Sermon upon the Mount, is a professed Exposition of the Commandments ; and maintains, in the most explicit Manner, all that I have advanced.—So that, if our LORD's Exposition is just, it will be neither rash, nor uncharitable to say ; There is not a Man upon Earth, but has broke them *all*.

Ther. Are We all Idolaters then ? All Adulterers ? All Murderers ? Shocking to imagine !

Asp. It is shocking, I confess.—But how much more shocking to true Religion, and to common Sense, if *such* Delinquents expect Justification by their own Deeds ?

Ther. This is no Proof of your Assertion, my good Friend.

Asp. To be fond of Gold ; to be enamoured with the World ; to love any Creature more than the ever-blessed CREATOR ; are Instances of Idolatry †, not quite so gross, but altogether as real, as to set up Idols in our Temples, or pay Acts of Ado-

ration to senseless Images. Have You always been free from this *Apostacy* of the *Affections*?

Our infallible TEACHER has informed Us, That unreasonable Anger, contemptuous Language, and malevolent Wishes *, are each a Species of Murder; and not many Removes from the Assassin's deadly Stab. Have You been always meek, always benevolent, and never chargeable with this *mental Homicide*?

We are farther assured, That the Indulgence of inordinate Desire is, in the impartial Estimate of Heaven, as the Commission of the impure Deed †. And evil Concupiscence, of every Kind, violates that sacred Precept, *Thou shalt not covet* †. Has your Will

* Matt. v. 22.

† Matt. v. 28.

† Rom. vii. 7. *Aspasio's* Observation brings to my Remembrance a *remarkable Incident*; which, as it is quite pertinent to our Purpose, the Reader will allow me to relate. It passed between a Friend of mine, and a certain ingenious Stranger, into whose Company He happened to fall.—The Gentleman was extolling, at a lavish Rate, the Virtue of *Honesty*: what a Dignity it imparted to our Nature! How it recommended Us to the Supreme BEING! He confirmed all by a celebrated Line from Mr. Pope,

An honest Man's the noblest Work of GOD.

Sir, replied my Friend, however excellent the Virtue of *Honesty* may be, I fear, there are very few Men in the World, that really possess it.—You surprise me! said the Stranger.—Ignorant as I am of your Character, Sir, I fancy, it would be no difficult Matter, to prove even *You* a dishonest Man.—I defy You.—Will You give me leave then, to ask You a Question or two; and promise not to be offended?—Ask your Questions, and welcome.—Have you never met with an Opportunity of getting Gain by some *unfair Means*?—The Gentleman paused.—I don't ask, Whether You made use of, but whether

○ You

Will been invariably upright, and warped with no irregular Inclination? Are You wholly unpolluted with this *Adultery of the Heart*?

I wait not for a Reply. I have often heard You plead *Guilty* to all—yes, to all and every of these Charges respectively.

Ther. Where, and when, *Aspasio*?

Asp. In the most venerable Place, and on the most solemn Occasion. And not You only, but a whole Multitude of self-condemned Criminals. — Our Church, You know, has engrafted the Decalogue into her public Service; and taught all her Members to answer, after the Repetition of each Commandment; *LORD, have Mercy upon Us, and incline our Hearts to keep this Law.* Is there any Sense in these Words? Or have We any Meaning, when We utter them? If We have, surely they must imply an Acknowledgment of Disobedience in every Particular.—The Criminal arraigned at the Bar, never falls on his Knees and craves Forgiveness,

B b 2

till You have met with, such Opportunity? I, for my Part, have; and, I believe, every Body else has.—Very probably I may.—How did You feel Your Mind affected, on such an Occasion? Had You *no* secret Desire, not the least Inclination, to seize the Advantage which offered? Tell me, without any Evasion, and consistently with the Character You admire?—I must acknowledge, I have not always been absolutely free from every irregular *Inclination*, but—Hold, Sir; none of your Salvos. You have confessed enough. If You had the Desire, though You never proceeded to the Action, this shews You was dishonest in Heart. This is what the Scripture calls *Concupiscence*. It defiles the Soul. It is a Breach of that Law, which requireth *Truth in the inner Parts*. And, unless You are pardoned through the Blood of *CHRIST*, will be a just Ground of your Condemnation, when *GOD* shall judge the Secrets of Men.

till He either confesses or is convicted. This then must be the Purport of our Response. “ We are
 “ verily guilty concerning this Thing. And we
 “ humbly implore both pardoning Mercy for the
 “ past, and strengthening Grace for the future.”

Give me leave to urge my Question a little farther.—Is there a *single Day*, in which You have not transgressed, some Way or other, this sacred Rule?

Ther. If the Law of GOD will dispense with no Deviation, not even in the first Starts of Thought—But surely to affirm this, is to extend the Law beyond all reasonable Bounds. The Motions of evil Desire, *if indulged*, are undoubtedly criminal. But are they also, *when restrained*, Breaches of Duty? I should rather imagine, that such Temptations are thrown in our Way, for the Trial of our Obedience. Which, had they no Power over our Affections, would not be Trials; and, when they are resolutely withstood, cannot be Faults.

Asp. What was the Judgment of our Reformers? And what is the Voice of our Church? We may find both in the Ninth Article. “ Although there
 “ is no Condemnation for them that believe and are
 “ baptised, yet the Apostle doth confess, That Con-
 “ cupiscence and Lust hath of itself the Nature of
 “ Sin.” It is not said, Concupiscence hath *then only* the Nature of Sin, when it is ripened into Action; but *of itself*, and before it breaks out into the Commission of Iniquity. *Of itself* it is contrary to the pure Nature, and therefore cannot but be condemned by the perfect Law of GOD.

Ther. This I can truly plead in my own Behalf; That it has not been customary with me to offend;
 at

at least not *presumptuously*, or of deliberate Wick-
edness.

Asp. My dear *Theron*, do not offer to *palliate* your Guilt. Such an Opiate may stupify, but will not cure: or rather, like Opiates ill prepared, it will intoxicate the Mind, and counteract the Operation of every healing Medicine.—Besides, it is not only pernicious, but false and unreasonable. You know the Use of that *solar Microscope*, and are able to inform me of its Effects.

Ther. I ought to be pretty well acquainted with these Experiments; since it has long been my favourite Diversion, to employ a few spare Hours in such agreeable Speculations.

Asp. You have seen the Body of an Insect, accommodated to the surprising Instrument. When, in this Situation, the Animal was pricked by a very fine Needle; your Eye, your naked Eye, just perceived the *Puncture*; and discovered, perhaps, a *Speck* of Moisture oozing from the Orifice. But, in what Manner were they represented, by the magnifying Instrument?

Ther. The Puncture was widened into a frightful Gash. The Speck of Moisture swelled into a copious Stream; and flowed, like a *Torrent* from the gaping Wound. An Ox, under the sacrificing Knife, scarce looks more bulky, or bleeds more largely.

Asp. Don't You apprehend my Design?—If *We*, short-sighted Mortals, and almost blinded with Self-love; if *We* cannot but be sensible of our Faults; how flagrant must they appear, in what enormous Magnitudes, and with what aggravating Circumstances, to an Eye perfectly pure, and infinitely penetrating?

Instead of attempting to extenuate our Offences, let Us make some such improving Reflections.—
 “If this holy Law, which prohibits the minutest Failure, form the Indictment; if this all-discerning GOD, who sifts our Conduct even to the smallest Defect, be the Judge; and our personal Goodness, which abounds with Imperfections, the Plea; what can We expect, at that decisive Hour, when the LORD shall lay Judgment to the Line, and Righteousness to the Plumbet?—
 “Surely, this Consideration should incline Us, to adopt the wise and ardent Wish of the Apostle; *That We may now, in this our Day, win CHRIST; and, at the last tremendous Audit, be found in Him; not having our own Righteousness, which is of the Law, for the Foundation of our Hopes, but the Righteousness which is of GOD, by Faith in JESUS CHRIST†.*”

Consider the Law in its nobler Capacity, as *enjoining* whatever is excellent.—Can You hope, *Theron*, to be justified by it, if You fall short of its Demands, not barely in a few Instances, but in *every* Action of your Life, and *every* Temper of your Heart?

Ther. Such a Hope, cherished amidst such Circumstances, would be fallacious and absurd.—But I trust, I am not so very faulty, or rather so entirely abandoned, as your Interrogatory supposes.

Asp. Have You duly examined the *Spirituality* of the divine Law?—It is styled, an incorruptible Picture of the High and Holy ONE, that inhabiteth Eternity. It is, doubtless, a Copy of his absolute Rectitude and supreme Perfection. It is a bright Repre-

* *Isai. xxviii. 17.*

† *Phil. iii. 8, 9.*

Representation of his *most pure* Nature, and a beautiful Delineation of his *most holy* Will.—It not only prescribes the external Duties of Righteousness and Holiness, but calls for the most upright Imaginations and devout Affections.—Nay, it insists upon the Exercise of every Virtue, and that in the *highest* Degree. Love to GOD, without the least Lukewarmness; and Love to our Neighbour, without any Unkindness; a Sanctity of Desire, that knows no Stain; and an Integrity of Behaviour, that includes whatever is *holy, just, and good*.—In short; it requires Us to be perfect, *even as our FATHER which is in Heaven is perfect* *.

Do any of your Actions come up to this exalted Standard? Are any of your Graces thus refined?

Ther. Am I then absolutely *an Insolvent*, before the great LORD of the Universe? Have I no Lamb in my Fold, that is without a Blemish? Nothing in my Life, nothing in my Heart, but what is defective and defiled?

B b 4

Asp.

* *Matt. v. 48.* Our LORD, having explained several Commandments of the Law, sums up the Whole, and gives Us the Spirit of all, in this most refined Precept; *Be Ye perfect even, &c.* If the Reader pleases to take this Passage into Consideration, He will have a more satisfactory Answer to *Theron's* Objection, concerning the *first Motions* of evil Desire; more satisfactory I mean, than was suggested in the preceding Pages. There, the Reply turned upon human Testimony; Here, it rests upon divine Authority.

I hope, the candid Reader will, on other Occasions, remember this Observation. And if, at any Time, the *strongest* Reasons are not immediately assigned; let Him suppose it possible, that they are omitted in one Place, only to be introduced and urged, perhaps with greater Advantage, in another.

Pleraque differet, & præsens in Tempus omittet. HOR.

Ass. Indeed, my Friend, this is not *your* Condition alone, but the Condition of the most irreproachable Person on Earth. There is *None* perfect, in any Character, or in any Work, no not One. None that obeys the divine Law, invariably and completely. And, before the Tribunal of GOD, nothing passes for Righteousness, but a complete and absolute Obedience.

Cast your Eye upon the Names, which are subjoined to those beautiful *Prints*. How elegant is the Engraving! How accurate are the Letters! The Strokes most delicately fine! Their Shape most exactly true!—Let me ask You to transcribe them with Your Pen; and make the Copy equal to the Original. Preserve all the noble Boldness of the *Roman* Stamp, and all the graceful Softness of the *Italian* Touch.—What? Could You not execute this Task, even in your present unimpaired Health, and with the Exertion of all your Skill? How miserably then must You fall short, if your Eyes were *dim* with Age; if your Hands shook with a *paralytic* Disorder; and your Understanding was oppressed with a *lethargic* Dulness?—Such is really the Case with regard to all the Children of Men. Our Nature is depraved; our moral Abilities are enervated; and our intellectual Faculties clouded. And can We, in such a State of Impotence, transcribe that sacred System, which is the very Image of GOD—transcribe it into our Tempers, and render it legible in our Lives, without diminishing one Jot or Tittle of its perfect Purity?

Ther. Though I fall short, there are Christians of a much higher Class. Christians, I don't doubt, who have these Laws written on their Hearts; all

whose Tempers are cast into this heavenly Mould. Nor am I myself without Hopes of making *more considerable* Advances in Holiness.

Assp. May your Hopes be quickened into vigorous Endeavours! And your Endeavours be crowned with abundant Success!—What You suppose, concerning very eminent Christians, I cannot wholly admit, neither do I wholly deny. They may have all their Tempers cast into the heavenly Mould: but then, they are conformed to the sacred Pattern, only *in Part*. There is a Resemblance; yet not such as that clear and steady Mirror (pointing to a fine Glass over the Chimney-piece) exhibits; but such as some turbulent and muddy Stream reflects.—If the Breasts of these eminent Christians were formed on the Model of *Drusus's* * House; I verily think, You would have a lower Opinion of their Acquisitions in Virtue.

David, whom GOD himself dignifies with the most exalted of all Characters, and styles *a Man after his own Heart* †; who, to a most inflamed Love, added a most accurate Knowledge, of the divine Testimonies; was deeply sensible of the Truth, I would inculcate. After an attentive Contemplation of the Sublimity, the Extent, the Sanctity of those heavenly Institutes, He breaks out into this humbling Exclamation;

* When *Drusus*, a noble *Roman*, was deliberating upon a Model for his new House; the Architect offered to build it in such a Taste, that no Eye should overlook any of his Rooms.—“ You quite mistake my Inclination,” said *Drusus*. I am for the very Reverse of your Plan. “ I would have my House so contrived, that every Passenger may see, whatever is transacted within.”

† For the Propriety of this Character, and its Correspondence with the Person, let me refer the Reader to a Note, in *Dialogue I.* p. 27.

mation; "*Who can tell, how oft He offendeth* * ?
 " Was the most vigilant Conduct, or the most pu-
 " rified Soul, examined by this consummate Rule;
 " innumerable would be found the Slips of the for-
 " mer, and glaring would the Failures of the latter
 " appear."

Ther. I cannot see the Reason, for *degrading* hu-
 man Nature, to such an extravagant Degree; and
 ranking human Works among the Refuse of Things.

Asp. Do You ask the Reason of this Remonstrance?
 —It is to preserve Us from the mischievous Error of
 the *Pharisee*. Who, measuring Himself, not by the
true, sublime, and extensive Sense of the Law; but
 by a false, debased, and mutilated Interpretation;
 became haughty in his own Conceit, and therefore
 abominable in the Sight of GOD.—Hear Him
 trumpeting his own Praise; *I am no Extortioner, no*
Adulterer †. This, the poor vain Creature fancied,
 was a sufficient Obedience, paid to the *second* Table.
 See Him still strutting in his own imaginary Plumes †.

* Psal. xix. 12.

† Luke xviii. 11.

† This seems to give the genuine Signification of το
 υψιλον εν αυθαρτοις, Luke xvi. 15. Not *that which is highly*
esteemed, υψιλον, ενδοξον. The Proposition, taken in this
 Sense, is neither necessarily nor universally true. The
 Meekness of *Moses*, the Fortitude of *Joshua*, the Wisdom
 of *Solomon*, were highly esteemed among those very Men,
 to whom our LORD addressed his Discourse. Yet none
 can suppose, that the Endowments of those illustrious
 Personages, were an *Abomination in the Sight of GOD*.—
 Whereas, whatever is *high and lifted up*, haughty and
 conceited; every Sentiment of Self-admiration, and all
 the Fruits which spring from that bitter Root; these are
 certainly and *invariably* Objects of the divine Abhorrence.

I think, therefore, the Sentence should be translated,
That which is vain and assuming; not among, but in Men,
in their Spirit and Temper. This Interpretation is most

suitable,

I fast twice in the Week; I give Tythes of all that I possess *. This, He foolishly imagined, was a due Compliance with the Injunctions of the *first* Table.

—The young Ruler, was evidently under the same Delusion, when He had the Assurance to declare; *All these Things*, which are prescribed by the divine Law, *have I kept from my Youth up* †.

A more pestilent Opinion, it is scarce possible for the Mind of Man to entertain. Nor can any Thing appear more egregiously mistaken, if We consider the *vast comprehensive* Scope of the sacred Precepts. That they require an *exact* Conformity, in every Particular, and every Punctilio. That they require the utmost Perfection of every Duty, and forbid the least Degree of every Sin.

Ther. Remember, *Aspasio*, what the Apostle has declared; *Not the Hearers, but the Doers of the Law, shall be justified.* The *Doers of the Law*; this shews the Possibility of performing its Precepts. *Shall be justified*; this proves, that Justification is by Obedience. This one Sentence seems to demolish, whatever You have been building on the Subject.

Asp. It is strange to observe, that some eminent Commentators have agreed with *Theron*, in giving the same inconsistent and uncomfortable Turn to the Apostle's Expression. Gravely telling Us, that

“ the
suitable, not only to Fact in general, but to the Import of this Word in particular. See *Rom. xi. 20.* Where it occurs in a similar Acceptation, *μη υψηλοφρονει.* *Be not high-minded.*—It seems also best to quadrate with the Tenour of our SAVIOUR's Reproof; *Ye are they that justify Yourselves before Men*, but all such arrogant Attempts, and every such elated Air (which constitute the *νοσηρον*) the most holy GOD beholds with Detestation.

LUKE xviii. 12.

† Matt. xix. 20.

“ the Doers of the Law, who steadily and uniformly,
 “ in the Tenour of their Lives, act agreeably to
 “ its Precepts, they, and they only, shall be justi-
 “ fied in the Day of final Audit and Account.”

This I call *inconsistent*. Because, it is diametrically opposite to St. Paul's Assertion; *By the Works of the Law, shall no Man living be justified. Uncomfortable*; because, if this was the Method of Justification, it would shut the Door of Hope on all Mankind.—Whereas, the Scope of the Apostle is, not simply to shew, in what Manner Sinners are justified before GOD; but what is requisite to their Justification, according to the Tenour of the divine Law. Which demands, not any Performance, but a complete Obedience. Discharged with all the Heart, and all the Strength; without any Deficiency in Action, or any Irregularity of Inclination. *Such Obedience* if any Man produces, He shall be accounted just, even by the Sentence of the Law.—But when did the Sun behold such a Person? Or what Annals have recorded such a Character?

Ther. Is there nothing valuable then in Regularity of Conduct, and Integrity of Heart? Nothing valuable, in our Acts of Charity, and Habits of Virtue?

Asp. From our *Fellow-creatures* they stand intitled to Respect, Imitation, and Gratitude. But before *infinite* Perfection, they must drop their Claim, and lie prostrate in the Dust; imploring Forgiveness, not challenging a Reward. We all discern a Beauty and a twinkling Lustre in the Stars, when viewed under the Shades of Night. But, when the magnificent Source of Day arises, their Beauty vanishes, their Lustre is Darkness. *Such* are human Accomplishments,

plishments, when compared with the perfect Law, or beheld by the piercing Eye, of the supremely glorious GOD.

Ther. Methinks, this Notion confounds the Difference of Good and Evil; and, by rendering all our Actions *blameable*, would render them all *alike*. This is levelling with a Witness!

Asp. It renders them all equally incapable of recommending Us to our MAKER. It says, and so does the Tenour of the Law, and so does the Wisdom of GOD, *I will declare thy Righteousness and thy Works; that, in the grand Article of Justification, they shall not profit Thee* *. For this Purpose, nothing is good, nothing effectual, but the Actions of one Man, that is CHRIST.

All that We perform, however *specious* it may seem, is very *far short* of our elevated Rule. Therefore, cannot procure the divine Favour, or intitle Us to the Kingdom of Heaven.—Nay, if GOD should enter into Judgment with Us, on the Foot of our own Performances; He would discover such Defects, even in the *choicest* Instances of our Obedience, as must render them Matter of Condemnation †, not meritorious of Applause.

Be pleased to observe this Penknife—What can be more exquisitely keen, than the Edge; or more nicely polished, than the Blade? But, how do they appear, when beheld through one of those Microscopes?

Ther.

* Isai. lvii. 12.

† To this Assertion St. Cyril, in Concert with several other Fathers, bears a very express Testimony: *Αὐτὸ ἡμῶν καὶ τὸ ὁρθῶς ἐπιδεῖναι δοκεῖν, μομφῆς καὶ αἰτίας ἀποκρίνασθαι οὐ δύναται. ὡς περὶ τὰ ποιούμενα τε καὶ βασανιστοῦ Θεοῦ.* Even those of our Actions, which seem to be performed in a right Manner, could not escape Censure and Blame, if GOD should but slightly examine, and bring them to the Test.

Ther. The Edge less sharp than the Woodman's Ax, or rather more blunt than his Iron Wedge. The Polish resembles a Mass of *coarse* Metal, rudely hammered on the Anvil.

Asp. How very delicate is the Cambrick, which forms your Ruffles; and gives such an ornamental Air to your whole Dress! Nothing can be finer, than the Threads; or more exact, than the Texture. But what is their Appearance in a microscopic View?

Ther. You would take the fine Threads for hempen Cords; and would almost be positive, that they had been *wattled* together, by the clumsy Hands of the Hurdle-maker; rather than curiously wove, in the Artift's Loom.

Asp. That lovely Piece of Enamel, which makes a Part of your Lady's penfile Equipage, quite charms the Spectator, with the Justness of its Figure, and the Radiancy of its Colours. But—

Ther. Under the Scrutiny of this searching Instrument, it loses all its Elegance; and instead of winning our Admiration, provokes our Contempt. It looks like a Heap of Mortar, *plastered* on by the Mason's Trowel.

Asp. You see then, *Theron*, what gross Indelicacies, what bungling Inequalities, this supplementary Aid to our Sight discovers, even in the *most finished* Works of human Art. So, and abundantly more, does the immaculate Purity of GOD, discern Imperfections in our most upright Deeds, and most guarded Hours.

Therefore, though the Apostle could confidently declare, *I know nothing by myself*; I am not conscious of any Remissness, or any Unfaithfulness, in the Discharge of my Office. Yet *I am not*, he adds, *thereby*

justified * ; for the LORD is greater than my Conscience, and may espy many a Failure, where I myself can see nothing faulty.

I said *immaculate* ; and I ought to have said more. Angels, and the Spirits of just Men made perfect, are endowed with immaculate, but the LORD JEHOVAH is possessed of *infinite* Purity.—Have You considered this Attribute of the GODHEAD, *Theron* ?

Ther. I have ; and not without Amazement at the charming, the awful Descriptions of it, which occur in the sacred Writings.—GOD is not only holy, but, as the Lawgiver of the *Jews* very sublimely expresses Himself, *glorious in Holiness* †. The sacred Penmen, treating of this illustrious Perfection, seem to labour the important Point. They indulge the loftiest Flights of Imagination ; they employ the boldest Figures of Speech ; and add the most glowing Colours of Eloquence ; not without frequent Acknowledgments, that all the Force of Language, is abundantly too *feeble*, for the unutterable Subject.

One of the Prophets, addressing the KING eternal, immortal, invisible, breaks out into this extatic Exclamation ; O LORD, my GOD, my HOLY ONE, *Thou art of purer Eyes, than (to allow, shall I say ? This is an Ascription of Praise, unspeakably too mean for thy surpassing Excellency. Thou art of purer Eyes, than) to look upon Evil, and canst not behold Iniquity* †.—Another, wrapt into a prophetic Vision, sees the *Seraphim* veiling their Faces, in Token of profound Humiliation ; hears those Sons of Ardour and Love, crying, in loud responsive Strains ; *Holy, Holy,*

* 1 Cor. iv. 4. † Exod. xv. 11. † Hab. i. 13.

Holy, Holy is the LORD GOD of Sabaoth *. So transcendently holy, says another devout Worshiper, is

* *Isai. vi. 3.* The Poets, and Writers of a bold Imagination, are particularly fond of *Machinery*; of introducing celestial Beings, in order to give some peculiar Dignity to their Plan, or some additional Strength to their Sentiments. With inimitable Propriety and Emphasis, is this Species of fine Writing used in Scripture. Especially in the Passage quoted above.

Let us consider—The *principal Object*. *I saw the LORD*; the supreme Judge, and the everlasting King. Manifesting Himself to the Eye of my Mind, in a Form consummately venerable, yet emblematical of his future Incarnation.—*Sitting upon a Throne*; expressive of that Sovereign Power, which ruleth over all; and prefigurative of that august Tribunal, from which He will pronounce the irreverfible Sentence.—The Throne was *high and lifted up*; like those divine Perfections, which are too high for human Comprehension, and are exalted above all Blessing and Praise.—*His Train*, or the Skirts of his Robe, *filled the Temple*. They extended themselves through all the sacred Edifice; representing those Dispensations of Mercy and Judgment, of Truth and Equity, which pervade Heaven and Earth. Which take their Course through Time; and will be prolonged to Eternity.

Let Us observe the *inferior Personages*. These are the *Seraphim*; pure and active Spirits. Likened, by the Psalmist, to Flames of Fire; styled, by the Apostle, Dominions and Principalities of Heaven. Who excel in Strength and Wisdom, in every great and shining Accomplishment.—Their *Attitude*. They wait around the KING immortal, seated on his Throne: they are in the highest Elevations of Honour, yet at the Footstool of JEHOVAH. They *stand*; are in a Posture of Service: with their Wings outstretched, ready to fly at the first Signal. It is not said, with their Eyes reverently cast down; but with their *Faces covered*; to denote the *deepest* Self-abasement. Like Creatures, that are conscious and ashamed of their own Meanness; or else overcome with the insupportable Glories, which beam from uncreated Majesty.—Their *Action*. They celebrate, not in cold Con-

is the everlasting GOD, that all-created Glory is totally eclipsed in his Presence. *He looketh to the Moon,*

Conversation, but with rapturous Songs; not with single Voices, but in a grand Choir (יהוה אל יהוה, see *Psal.* lxxxvii. 5, 6.) the most amiable yet tremendous Sanctity of the LORD Almighty.—Their *Speech*. Though impressed and penetrated with the prodigious Theme, they attempt not to describe it. Impracticable that, even by the Tongues of Angels! They express themselves, therefore, in the Language of profound Adoration; in repeated, in reiterated Acclamations to the ineffable Attribute; *Holy! Holy! Holy!*—The *Effects* of the Vision. The Posts of the Door, shake at the Voice: the ponderous and magnificent Pillars of Brass (see *2 Chron.* iii. 17.) tremble like a Leaf.

————— *While Clouds begin*
To darken all the Dome, and Smoke to roll
In dusky Wreaths, the Sign of Wrath awak'd.

The spacious and beautiful House; mourning, as it were, under the Marks of divine Indignation; joins with the trembling Columns, and adoring Seraphs, to tell the thoughtless World; *What a fearful Thing it is, to fall into the Hands of the living GOD!*—The Prophet himself is struck with Astonishment; is overwhelmed with Awe; and cries out, “as a Woman in her Pangs.”—Can any Thing be more enlivened and alarming? More delicately or more sublimely imaged?

If I shall not trespass upon the Reader's Patience, I would beg Leave to add a Remark, concerning the Word *Sabaoth*. Which, though a *Hebrew* Expression, is retained in that admirable Hymn, intitled *Te Deum*; and which some People, I am inclined to believe, inadvertently confound with *Sabbath*.—The latter signifies the *Rest* of the seventh Day; and, in this Connection, yields a Sense, not very apposite, and comparatively mean. Whereas, the former denotes *Armies* or *Hosts*; and furnishes Us with an Image, truly grand and majestic; worthy to be admitted into the Songs of Seraphs.—It glorifies GOD, as the great, universal, uncontrollable SOVEREIGN:

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*Moon, and it shineth not ; yea, the Stars are not pure in his Sight **. And his very Angels, those refined and exalted Intelligences, *He chargeth with Folly* †.

Asp. Very majestic Descriptions !—And pray let Us observe the Impressions, which such Beamings of the divine Effulgence made upon the Saints of old.—*Moses*, drawing near the cloudy Pavilion, the Presence-chamber of the HOLY ONE of *Israel*, says, with Emotions of uncommon Dread ; *I exceedingly fear and quake* ‡ !—When *Job* is favoured with some peculiar Manifestations of the omnipotent GOD, see his Posture ! Hear his Words ! *I abhor myself, and repent in Dust and Ashes* §. How strong is the Language ! How deep the Abasement ! When *Isaiab* saw the incomprehensible JEHOVAH, sitting upon his Throne ; and the Princes of Heaven, adoring at his Footstool ; seized with a Pang of reverential Fear, He cried out ; *Woe is me ! I am undone ! For I am a Man of unclean Lips* § !—When *Ezekiel* beheld an emblematical Representation of HIM, who dwelleth in Light inaccessible : when the ANTI-ENT of Days, veiled under a human Shape, appeared to *Daniel* : though One was a devout Priest, and each was an eminent Prophet ; yet, overwhelmed with a Mixture of Veneration and Terror, they both fell down at his Feet as dead ¶. And this, not before

who exercises a *supreme Dominion* over all the Orders of Being, from the loftiest Archangel that shines in Heaven, to the lowest Reptile that crawls in Dust. Who says to a Legion of Cherubs, *Go* ; and they go : — to a Swarm of Insects, *Come* ; and they come : — to any, to every Creature, *Do this* ; and they do it. See Matt. viii. 9.

Job xxv. 5.

† Job iv. 18.

‡ Heb. xii. 21.

§ Job xlii. 6.

§ Isai. vi. 5.

¶ Ezek. i. 28.

Dan. x. 8, 9.

before a full Display, but only before a *Glimpse* of the GODHEAD. Which, though partial and transient, was too dazzlingly bright, for an Eye of Flesh to bear.

O my Friend! my *Theron*! what Figure must *our* mean Performances, *our* low Attainments make, before this immensely glorious GOD?—Let Us examine the Behaviour and Spirit of *Job*, a little more particularly. He is one of your favourite Examples; and indeed very deservedly. For, in Piety, He had no Superior, and no Equal; *there was none like Him in the Earth*. Yet, when He has to do with the MAKER of all Things, and the JUDGE of all Men, He pours out his abashed Soul in these very remarkable Professions: *If I justify myself, my own Mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse* *.—He declares yet farther; *If I wash myself in Snow-water, and make my Hands never so clean, yet shalt Thou, O righteous and eternal GOD, plunge me in the Ditch*; manifest me, notwithstanding all this Care and Circumspection, to be a guilty and a filthy Creature; yea, so very guilty and filthy, that *my own Clothes*, were they sensible of the Pollution, *could not but abhor me*.

This He confesses, not because He was conscious to Himself of any Immorality; but because his Mind was filled with the most affecting Sense, of GOD's inconceivable Holiness, and infinite Glory. For, adds the venerable Sufferer, *He is not a Man as I am*; but a BEING of such extensive Knowledge, that no individual Thing can escape his Discernment; of such exalted Purity, that every Spot of Defilement is loathsome in his Sight. For which

C c 2

Reason,

* See Job ix. 20, 21.—30, 31, 32.

Reason, it is absolutely impossible, *that I should answer Him*, with reference to my own personal Righteousness: *or that We should come together in Judgment*, on any such Footing, without Confusion to myself, and Ruin to my Cause.

To all this He subjoins, what is still more memorable and exemplary: *Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my Soul, I would despise my Life.*—He supposes Himself in a higher State, than your most advanced Christian; though I were *perfect*. Yet, even in such a State, were it attainable and attained, *I would not know my Soul*; not dwell upon, not plead, no, not so much as cherish a Thought of, my own Accomplishments and Acquirements. In the important Business of Justification, they should stand for Cyphers; they should be thrown into Shades; they should entirely disappear.—Nay more; *I would despise my Life*; my Life, with all its most shining Actions and most distinguished Virtues, should be reckoned insignificant and despicable. Just as *insignificant and despicable*, with respect to this great Transaction, as a wandering Spark would be, if appointed to diffuse Day amidst the Darkness of Night, or to produce Spring amidst the Depths of Winter.

Ther. These are alarming Hints, *Aspasio*; I must confess.—A Law, which condemns all vain Imaginations, and every irregular Desire! Which requires an *exact* and *universal* Obedience, both in Heart and Life!—A GOD of such Majesty, Purity, and Glory; that Men of the most approved Integrity, are overwhelmed with *Confusion*, in his Presence?—I shall consider them, at my Leisure, with the Attention they deserve.—At present, I believe,

believe, Opportunity is giving Us the Slip. Yonder Coach seems to be moving this Way, and the Livery looks like *Philander's*.

Aspasio, desirous to fix these Convictions—which are of the utmost Consequence to our Faith and Salvation—very desirous to fix them on his Friend's Mind, replied.

Asp. As your Visitants are at a Distance, give me leave to observe; That the wisest of Men, attending to the *first* of these Particulars *, has poured Contempt upon all human Excellency; *There is not a just Man upon Earth, that doeth Good, and sinneth not †.* The Apostle of *CHRIST* takes Shame to Himself, on the same Account; and teaches all Mankind to strike the Sail of Self-conceit; *In many Things We offend all ‡.*—*David*, considering the latter of these Points §, prays with the utmost Earnestness; *Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, O LORD!* and assigns this humbling Reason for his Petition; *For, in thy Sight, shall no Man living be justified §.* This induced *Nehemiah*, who had been so nobly zealous for the Honour of his *GOD*, not to confide in his own valuable Services, but make Application to forgiving Goodness. *Spare me, O LORD, according to thy great Mercy ¶.*

Had I set before You the Example of the poor *Publican*, who smote upon his Breast; durst not lift up his Eyes to Heaven; but cried from the Bottom of a polluted Heart, *GOD be merciful to me a Sinner **!* Self-love, might possibly have whispered;

“Surely,

* The Perfection of the divine Law. † *Eccles.* vii. 20. ‡ *Jam.* iii. 2. § The Purity of the divine Majesty. § *Psal.* cxliii. 2. ¶ *Neh.* xiii. 22. ** *Luke* xviii. 13.

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“ Surely, I am not to be ranked with that abominable Wretch. I stand upon some better Footing, than such an infamous Offender.”—With respect to the Enjoyment of eternal Life, We stand upon no better, upon no other. And when *low* as that obnoxious despised Creature, We are upon the very same Ground with the most *exalted* Saints. They all appear before the MAJESTY of HEAVEN, in the same Attitude of unfeigned Humiliation, and with the same Acknowledgments of utter Unworthiness.—For, it is a certain Truth, and admits of *no* Exception; That, to justify Sinners, is not the Privilege of human Obedience, but the *sole* Prerogative of the *LORD* our Righteousness.

Ther. Is not the Practice of *Hezekiah* an Exception to your Rule? These, if I recollect aright, are the Words of that holy King; *I beseech Thee, O LORD, remember how I have walked before Thee in Truth, and with a perfect Heart, and have done that which is good in thy Sight* *. You see, He puts the Issue of his Tryal before the everlasting GOD, upon his own Integrity and his own Obedience.

Asp. These are his Words, but they are not used with *this* View. He humbly represents before the great SOVEREIGN of the World, how beneficial his former Life *had been*, and how serviceable his prolonged Life *might be*, to the best Interests of the *Jewish* Nation. He appeals to his Obedience, not that He may establish his Hope of eternal Happiness in Heaven; but that He may obtain a Reprieve from the Grave, and a Lengthening of his Tranquility on Earth.—Neither is this Obedience gloried in, by way of Merit; but only pleaded,

by

* 2 Kings xx. 3.

by way of Argument: As though He had said;
 “ Remember, gracious GOD, how I have exerted
 “ my royal Authority, to suppress Idolatry, to ex-
 “ tirpate Vice, and to promote thy true Religion.
 “ Consider, how greatly thy People stand in need
 “ of such a vigilant and zealous Governor; and
 “ to what a miserable Condition both Church and
 “ State may be reduced, if Thou takest away thy
 “ Servant by this threatened but untimely Stroke.
 “ And, for the Welfare of *Judah*; for the Honour
 “ of thy Name, for the Support of thy own Wor-
 “ ship, *O spare me a little!*”

Aspasio paused; expecting a Reply.—As *Theron* continued silent and musing, *Aspasio*, with a Smile of Benevolence, proceeded.—Come, my *Theron*; why so deep in Thought? Have You any Objection to the Evidences I have produced?—They are some of the most *dignified* Characters, and *illustrious* Personages, that could be selected from all Ages. Kings, Princes, and Patriots! Priests, Saints, and Martyrs! Should these be deemed insufficient, I can exhibit a larger and nobler Cloud of Witnesses—*larger*, for they are a great Multitude, which no Man can number, of all Nations, and Kindreds, and People, and Tongues—*nobler*, for they stand before the Throne, and before the LAMB, clothed with white Robes, and Palms in their Hands.—Ask those shining Armies, Who they are, and Whence they came? Their Answer is comprised in one of my favourite Portions of Scripture: one of those delightful Texts, from which I hope to derive Consolation even in my last Moments. For which Reason, You will allow me to repeat it, though it may perhaps be mentioned in a former

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Conversation. *We are they, who came out of great Tribulation; and have washed our Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the LAMB: therefore are We before the Throne* *.

Some of them laid down their Lives for the Sake of *CHRIST*; many of them were eminent for Works of Righteousness; all of them were endued with real Holiness. Yet, none of these Qualifications constituted their *Passport*, into the Regions of endless Felicity. They had *washed their Robes*; had fled to the Atonement, and pleaded the Merits of *JESUS* their SAVIOUR — Hereby they had *made them white*; this was the Cause of their Acquittance from Guilt, and their complete Justification—And *therefore*, on this Account, their Persons were accepted; they were presented without Spot before the Throne; and admitted to that Fullness of Joy, which is at GOD's Right-hand for evermore.

Ther. I have no Objection to your Witnesses. But, methinks, your Doctrine is strangely *debasings* to human Nature.

Asp. A Sign, *Theron*, that it is agreeable to the Spirit and Intention of the Gospel. Which is calculated, as the eloquent *Isaiab* foretold, to humble the Sinner, and exalt the SAVIOUR †; *The*
Lofti-

* Rev. vii. 14, 15.

† This corresponds with a very valuable Maxim, which an eminent Divine once recommended to his People, as a Touch-stone to distinguish *evangelical* Truth.—That Doctrine, he said, which tends

To humble the Sinner;
To exalt the SAVIOUR;
To promote Holiness;

That

Leftinefs of Man shall be bowed down, and the Haughtinefs of Men shall be made low, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that Day * : “ Man, though
 “ naturally vain, shall be made sensible of his
 “ numberless Offences ; shall acknowledge the De-
 “ fects, which attend his highest Attainments ; shall
 “ confess the Impoffibility of being justified by the
 “ Deeds of the Law ; and place all his Hope upon
 “ the propitiatory Death, and meritorious Obedi-
 “ ence, of the *LORD JESUS CHRIST.*”

That Doctrine, which tends to accomplish *all* these Designs, You may embrace as found. That which is defective in its Influence on *any one* of them, You should reject as corrupt.

* Ifai. ii. 11.

The END of the FIRST VOLUME.



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